CHAPTER-VII
GANDHIAN PRAXIS-I
SARVODAYA SOCIETY - VISION AND STRUCTURE

Article 1

THE VISION OF A NEW WORLD: SARVODAYA

Gandhi views life as an organic whole and therefore, insists that it cannot be divided into watertight compartments like spiritual, moral, social, economic, political, individual or collective. For Gandhi,

all seemingly separate segments are but different facets of man's life. They act and react upon one another. In reality, there can be no problems that are purely moral, economic, political, social, individual or collective. They are inextricably intertwined (1).

So Gandhi never approaches life or its problems in fragments or segments. Just as the individual human being is an integral whole of body, mind and spirit, life too is a synthetic whole of the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the material (2).

As Gandhi believed that all life is one, as a logical corollary to it he also believed in the inherent equality of all men. So he finds no ground for accepting any dichotomy between individual and social interests and goals. As Ramshray Roy argues, for Gandhi the extended self becomes the principle of sociality and consequently there is a basic continuity of the individual and society (3).

VII. 1. 1. Individual and society

There are, of course, basic distinctions between individuals. They point only to the manyness of reality and not to any unbridgeable differences. So Gandhi does not accept the theory of the unresolved conflict between individual and society. It is true that in the Gandhian scheme of things the individual is the key figure in all transactions. Gandhi says that man, in the sense of individual human being, is the supreme consideration and the measure of all things (4). But he never visualises man

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apart from society, one who considers 'the other' as 'hell'.

As individuals are inseparably bound together in the oneness of life, inorder for the individual to achieve his ultimate purpose must do so in society. Thus, in the Gandhian paradigm individual and social goals meet and merge. It is incumbent upon the individuals to observe vows and practise strict ethical discipline and at the same time engage in selfless service to realise the ultimate goal of life. But as pointed out earlier, self-realisation is not a private goal that one can individually achieve all by himself by withdrawing into a mountain cave, nor is it an eschatological ideal to be attained in a life hereafter. Self-realisation as the ultimate goal and purpose of life is to be sought along with our fellow brethren in society.

To drive home the organic relation between individual and society Gandhi brings in the image of the drop and the ocean. The ocean is composed of drops of water, each drop is an entity and yet is a part of the whole, 'the one and the many.' In this ocean of life, we are little drops. My doctrine means that I must identify myself with life, with everything that lives. . . . (5).

It means, in short, that the process of self-transformation leading to self-realisation must take place in this world, in our social milieu. As Ramshray Roy says:

the necessity of remaining in the world arises because, on the one hand, the world is essential for self-development and, on the other, the world has to be reshaped in the image of the freedom and morality that one seeks to attain in one's own life. As such, the quest for self-realisation becomes, for Gandhi, also the quest for actualising the spiritual and moral values one aspires for in the institutions and processes of social order. The principle of inwardness that characterises the process of self-transformation also thus becomes the ground for turning outward to the external world (6).

VII. 1. 2. The rationale of a just social order

There is no gainsaying the influence that a society, its institutions and processes, exerts on the individual throughout his life. "It is society that both limits and liberates the potentialities of the individual, not only by placing upon him
definite restraints but also by moulding his attitudes, his beliefs, his morals and his ideals. Without society and the support of social heritage the individual personality does not and cannot come into existence" (7). Because of this interdependence between the individual and society, it becomes indispensable that if the ideals and values of truth and non-violence are to shape the character and conduct of the individual's personal life they should constitute the basis of the society of which he is a member. It may be possible for a few extraordinary individuals to free themselves from the trammels of the social environment and hold fast to the ideals they value and cherish. But the run-of-the mill folk who constitute the large majority generally compromise with the predominant trends in society and adjust themselves to its rules and regulations, conventions and codes. "It is, therefore, clear that unless and until the social order is basically non-violent, the masses of people will not be in a position to lead a non-violent life" (8). So the creation of a social order that is congenial for the fulfilment of the ultimate end of life, self-realisation, through dedicated and selfless service of all, sentient and non-sentient creations, becomes an imperative. This new and transformed social order which would facilitate the greatest good of all, and pave the way for the liberation of one and all Gandhi calls **Sarvodaya**.

As Gandhi was not a system-builder or model-builder, he did not prepare for posterity a detailed blueprint of such a social order. But from the experiments he carried out, the activities of the organizations he founded, and from his speeches and writings we get a general but clear picture of the *sarvodaya* social order (9). It is important to remember in this context that Gandhi had repeatedly made it clear that he did not want to found a sect or leave any 'ism' behind. "... but if Gandhism is another name for sectarianism it deserves to be destroyed. If
I were to know after my death that what I had stood for had degenerated into sectarianism. I should be deeply pained. . . . "

(10).

In fact, the term Gandhism was disgusting to him, he almost abhorred it. Yet, a fact it is that, as Pearl S. Buck said, the name of Gandhi even in his lifetime had passed beyond the meaning of an individual to the meaning of a way of living in a troubled modern world (11). And therefore, the word Gandhism is used by a number of writers to signify his total philosophy. But the word Sarvodaya is used with Gandhi's own approval to mean the philosophy of life that he propounded. R.R. Diwakar says that the two words, Sarvodaya and Satyagraha spell the whole teaching of Gandhi: the rise and all round progress of all beings through satyagraha, Ahimsa oriented adherence to one's truth unto death (12).

VII. 1. 3. Sarvodaya, a comprehensive concept

Although the concept of Sarvodaya had a very humble beginning (13), it developed in the hands of Gandhi into a full-fledged and comprehensive concept (14). R.R. Diwakar states that the Gangotri - like conception of Sarvodaya of the Phoenix Settlement days went on gathering momentum and volume to become the Ganga of later days at the hands of its originator and innovator, Gandhi, and his trusted followers Vinoba and J.P. (15).

Today it claims a place in the socio-economic philosophies of mankind. It would be an alternative to other existing ideologies for attaining and establishing a human society which can alleviate all disparities and distortions which have crept into all the socio-economic-political structures and are stemming the tide of modern progress as a whole (16).

A closer look at the concept of sarvodaya will convince us that it is based on Gandhi's metaphysics. The vision of sarvodaya is based on the spiritual perception of the oneness of existence. This invaluable piece of ancient wisdom - that all life is one - is today corroborated by what new physics tells us: "all that exists and moves is but the play of Energy in Flux"
In fact, Gandhi spelt this wisdom in the form of *sarvodaya*, the good and progress of all sentient beings. Although literally *sarvodaya* means the rise and prosperity of all human beings, in scientific terms it would mean that evolutionary, all-sided development of all human beings without exception and without any distinction of high or low on account of race, sects, religion, caste, rich or poor, literate or illiterate. *...* Sarvodaya would, therefore, mean a system or a way of life individually as well as socially and collectively in which each one has equal and/or equitable scope and opportunity to develop in all dimensions of which each is capable, consistent with equal scope and opportunity for all. This will further mean—since human being is but an integral part of social system—that in order to achieve the aim of *sarvodaya* there will have to be a socio-economic-political structure in which all human beings will have equal and/or equitable opportunities for legitimate growth (*Vikas*) and expression of potentialities inherent in each of the individuals constituting a human society or societies (*18*).

When the scheme of *sarvodaya* was developed, Gandhi thought in terms of human as well as sentient beings. Vinoba who elaborated the concept inadvertently restricted it to human beings and human society and the whole of humanity. But according to R.R.Diwakar, in view of man's recent scientific knowledge about the eco-system and the total dependence of man's existence and healthy growth on a balanced ecology the concept of *sarvodaya* must be extended to all sentient and non-sentient beings.

Once we accept *sarvodaya* as a concept for the evolutionary and all-sided development, not only of man but of all sentient beings (animal life and plant life) since man's own future depends on the health of the eco-system, we will have to look upon the whole of the planet and everything on or in it, from that point of view. That is, the health and healthy growth of the sentient world had to be organised with a view to its being helpful for human evolution to higher moral and spiritual levels. Matter and the material forces will have to be engineered and utilised from this twin point of view, namely, the health and harmony and growth of the sentient world and further, the all-sided development of man with special emphasis on moral and spiritual excellence. *...* (*19*).

Thus, we can see that the concept of *Sarvodaya* is quite in tune with his metaphysical presuppositions and the ultimate goal that he has set for life.
VII. 1. 4. *Sarvodaya* and the law of history

Just as the concept of *Sarvodaya* is based on the metaphysical perception of the oneness of all life, of everything in the universe, it draws its dynamics from Gandhi's understanding of the law (and course) of history and his view of cosmic evolution. He believed that human society is a ceaseless growth, an unfoldment in terms of spirituality. If we observe the evolution of human society, says Gandhi, we can find that humanity is steadily, though slowly, progressing towards *ahimsa*.

If we turn our eyes to the time of which history has any record, down to our own time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards *AHIMSA*. Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time, when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He, therefore, took to agriculture and depended principally on Mother Earth for his food. Thus, from being a nomad he settled down to civilized, stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of *a* [symbiotic] he became member of a country and a nation. All these are signs of progress in *AHIMSA* and diminishing *HIMSA*. Had it been otherwise, the human species would have been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species have disappeared (20).

Gandhi rejected the theory of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest and agreed with Kropotkin who argued that nature's first principle is mutual aid and relationships between and within a species are not primarily aggressive but cooperative. It is a symbiotic relationship in which one's development is coterminus with the development of others. The very fact that humankind persists shows that the cohesive force is greater than the destructive, the centripetal force is greater than the centrifugal (21).

The world is held together by bonds of love. History does not record the day to day incidents of love and service. It only records incidents of conflicts and war. Actually, however, acts of love and service are much more common in the world than conflicts and quarrels (22).

This emphasis on the unrecorded force of love is an echo of what Gandhi had stated early in the *Hind Swaraj*. "... History, then, is a record of interruption of the course of Nature.
Soul-force being natural is not recorded in history" (23).

VII. 1. 5. Non-violent ordering of life

Thus, it is clear that Gandhi understands the force of love or non-violence or soul-force as the operative principle of the dynamics of history and therefore, he holds the view that for a proper unfoldment of human potentialities and capabilities we must act in accord with this principle. Gandhi says:

I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction, and therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living. And if that is the law of life we have to work it out in daily life. . . . (24).

In order to ensure the working out of the cohesive force of love or non-violence in daily life we have to organise and order all aspects and departments of life on the basis of this principle. And that is precisely what Gandhi visualises in Sarvodaya. It means that non-violence in the sense of creative and active love must become the basis of the socio-economic-political and cultural structure of the new society which will thus ensure the full flowering of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual potentialities of the individuals who constitute that society and thus lead to the realisation of the ultimate purpose of life.

In the light of this understanding we will now examine the structure of the Sarvodaya society under four heads, viz., social, economic, political and educational.

Article 2

THE SOCIAL ORDER OF SARVODAYA

"Man being a social being", writes Gandhi, "has to device some method of social organisation. We in India have evolved caste, they in Europe have organised class. . . . if caste has produced certain evils, class has not been productive of anything less" (25). The existing social order is unacceptable to Gandhi
because it is based on violence or exploitation and is organised hierarchically. In a hierarchical social order the dignity of the human individual is totally negated and there is no equality of any kind. It is an order which practises segregation and rationalises discriminations of various kinds and promotes such social evils as untouchability, oppression of women, alcoholism etc. In short, it alienates man from himself and his fellow beings and hinders the quest for self-realisation. Gandhi, therefore, visualises a social order which would be egalitarian, classless, casteless and without any vertical division of high or low.

VII. 2. 1. Based on the oneness of life

This conception is based on the essential oneness and unity of all life, on the brotherhood of mankind and on non-violence which is the operative principle of this fundamental perception. Gandhi says:

All society is held together by non-violence even as the earth is held in her position by gravitation. But when the law of gravitation is discovered, the discovery yielded results of which our ancestors had no knowledge. Even so when society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of non-violence its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today (26).

In such a social order based on truth and non-violence there is no scope for class struggle or communal conflict because cooperation and not conflict will be the moving force behind it.

VII. 2. 2. The Varna system in the Gandhian frame of reference

The above picture of the social order being drawn by Gandhi might appear to some at least to be Utopian. But as a practical idealist not only did Gandhi enumerate some of the salient features of the ideal social order but also tried to bring such an order into existence through his Constructive Programme (27). As a model for restructuring society Gandhi points to the social organisation of the Hindus known as Varnashramadharma, the law of varna and of ashramas which he regards as one of the greatest discoveries of the ancient rishis of India (28).
In order to gain a proper understanding of the views of Gandhi on the varna system, it is essential to recall the fact that in advocating a non-violent reordering of society Gandhi has a well defined objective in view and that is nothing but creating the most congenial social conditions so that "our energy would be set free for exploring those vast fields whereby and wherethrough, we know God" (29). Even while trying to present his interpretation and defense of varnayavastu - varna system - Gandhi reiterates his conviction that "man is born in order that he may utilise every atom of his energy for the purpose of knowing his Maker" (30). So he wanted to evolve a social order in which, drawing from his own imagery, as many atoms of man's energy as possible must be used for knowing God i.e., self-realisation. It implies that no energy shall be wasted on exploring different means of livelihood or avenues of amassing riches. Gandhi knew that this was how man generally wasted his precious time and energy.

So the question arises: What social system is the most ideal in which the individual members need not have to waste time and energy in exploring different means of livelihood but can set apart as much time and energy as possible in the pursuit of the ultimate purpose of life? This is the question that Gandhi seeks to find an answer. The answer, all would agree, is a system where there is a healthy division of work based on the tastes, talents and capabilities of the individual members, so that they need not have to waste their precious time and energy on trivialities but can expend them for the realization of the higher goals of life. Gandhi has understood the Varnashramadharma of ancient India as constituting such a healthy division of work and therefore, suggests that it may be taken as a model for reorganising the existing exploitative and competitive social system. What Gandhi advocates is not a total transplantation of the ancient system as such but an acceptance of the lessons of
the division of labour through which we can keep our material ambitions under leash and set free our vital energy in the pursuit of the higher goals of life.

It is in the light of this understanding that Gandhi interprets and recommends the varna system. The meaning of varna according to Gandhi is incredibly simple.

It simply means the following on the part of us all: the hereditary calling of our forefathers in so far as that traditional calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics and this only for the purpose of earning one's livelihood. You will realise that if all of us follow this law of varna we would limit our material ambition and our energy would be set free for exploring those vast fields whereby and wherethrough we can know God" (31).

Describing the varna system Gandhi writes further:

... . The four divisions define a man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse. The divisions define duties, they confer no privileges. All are born to serve God's creation, a brahmana with his knowledge, a kshatriya with his power of protection, a vaishya with his commercial ability and a shudra with bodily labour. This however does not mean that a brahmana for instance, is absolved from bodily labour or the duty of protecting himself and others. His birth makes a brahmana predominantly a man of knowledge, the fittest by heredity and training to impart it to others. There is nothing, again, to prevent the shudra from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only, he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities for service. Varnashrama is self-restraint and conservation and economy of energy (32).

This occupational division of society into four varnas, according to Gandhi, has a scientific basis and is not against reason (33). Gandhi argues that this four-fold division of labour viz., teaching, defense, creation of wealth and manual service exists in every community and country and that just as the law of gravitation existed even before it was discovered by Newton, the law of varna also existed before the Hindu rishis discovered it (34). Thus, for Gandhi, the law of varna is a universal law governing the entire human family.

Varna system, according to Gandhi, is based on the belief in the hereditary transmissibility of character which (doctrine) Gandhi also accepts. So he says:
I believe that just as every one inherits a particular form so does he inherit the particular characteristics and qualities of his progenitors and to make this admission is to conserve one's energy. That this admission, if he will act upon it, put a legitimate curb on our ambitions and thereby our energy is set free for extending the field for spiritual research and spiritual evolution. It is this doctrine of *Varnashramadharma* which I have always adopted (35).

In the light of his acceptance of the doctrine of hereditary transmissibility of character and talents Gandhi further adds:

I believe that every man is born in the world with certain natural tendencies. Every person is born with certain definite limitations which he cannot overcome. From a careful observation of those limitations the law of *Varna* was deduced. It establishes certain spheres of action for certain people with certain tendencies. This avoided all unworthy competition. Whilst recognising limitations, the law of Varna admitted no distinctions of high or low, on the one hand it guaranteed to each the fruits of his labours and on the other it prevented him from pressing upon his neighbour. This great law has been degraded and fallen into disrepute. But my conviction is that an ideal social order will only be evolved when the implications of this law are fully understood and given effect to (36).

*Varnashrama* as interpreted by Gandhi satisfies the social, economic and religious or spiritual needs of a community (37). He considers *varna* as an extension of the principle of the family because both are governed by blood and heredity (38). So when a community practises the law of *varna* it becomes as homogenous and integrated as a family. Viewed from the social point of view, creating a family feeling among the members of a community is the best possible adjustment for social stability and progress. In short, fulfilment of the law of *varna* would remove the gradation of high and low and would be a very effective remedy for the present social evils and would create an atmosphere conducive to self-realisation.

From the economic point of view also the value of *varna* system is very high, according to Gandhi. "It ensured hereditary skill, it limited competition. It was the best remedy against pauperism and it had all the advantages of trade guilds" (39). Highlighting its efficacy in preventing economic competition.
Gandhi says that, "if it is regarded as a law laying down, not the rights or the privileges of the community governed by it but their duties, it ensures the fairest possible distribution of wealth, though it may not be an ideal, i.e., strictly equal distribution" (40). Also the law of varna is based on the principle of heredity which has the support of the findings of modern psychology (41). When a man follows the occupation of his father a lot of time and energy is saved which otherwise will have to be spent on learning the occupation. In this way also it serves the community economically.

Coming to the religious or spiritual significance of the law of varna Gandhi adds that when the whole community accepts the law, it will be possible for its members to devote ample time for spiritual perfection (42).

I hold this to be a universal law governing the human family. If man's function as distinguished from that of lower animal is to know God, it follows that he must not devote the chief part of his life to making experiments in finding out what occupations will best suit him for earning his livelihood. He will recognise that it is best for him to follow the father's occupation and to devote his spare time to qualify himself for the task to which mankind is called (43).

And the task to which mankind is called is nothing but knowing his Maker i.e., self-realisation and according to Gandhi the varna system is acceptable to him as it facilitates the realization of the ultimate goal of life.

A torrent of coarse invectives and vituperative diatribes has been directed against Gandhi for the approval he bestowed on the varna system (44). Needless to say that it is the result of a very grave misunderstanding. In order to gain a proper understanding of Gandhi's position vis-a-vis the varna system it is essential to emphasise at least four important points.

(i) Varna is not to be confused with caste as some thinkers do (45). Although Gandhi occasionally used the terms caste and varna as almost synonymously till about 1925, subsequently he drew a clear distinction between the two and stated that varna
should not be confused with caste. He wrote in 1925: “I regard Varnashramadharma as a healthy division of work based on birth. The present ideas of caste are a perversion of the original...

system became clear and emphatic beyond the shadow of a doubt: “Varna has nothing to do with caste. Down with the monster of caste that masquerades in the guise of varna. It is a travesty of varna that has degraded Hinduism and India” (47).

(ii) Gandhi was of the opinion that it was not birth alone that determined a person's varna. He says:

Varna is intimately, if not indissolubly connected with birth. ... varna is determined by birth, but can be retained only by observing its obligations. One born of Brahmana parents will be called a Brahmana, but if his life fails to reveal the attributes of a Brahmana, when he comes of age he cannot be called a Brahmana. He will have fallen from Brahmanahood. On the other hand, one who is born not a Brahmana but reveals in his conduct the attributes of a Brahmana, will be regarded as a Brahmana, though he will himself disclaim the label (48).

Thus it is clear that birth plays only an incidental role, and it is the qualities, attributes and conduct of a person that really determines his varna.

(iii) Gandhi considers all varnas as equal. There is no warrant for considering one varna to be superior or inferior to another. The law of varna refers to a calling for earning one's livelihood. In addition to one's hereditary calling, one is free to do any other work with a view to serving society and for self-realisation (49). Gandhi also says that there is no question of compelling any person to follow the parental occupation against his or her aptitude (50).

(iv) Gandhi has stated that though varnas are to be four, the number is not unalterable. In future reconstruction the number can be increased or reduced. What is essential is that one must seek his livelihood and no more from following the vocation to which one is born (51).

Gandhi considers our failure to follow the law of varna in
its purity as largely responsible for our economic and spiritual ruin (52). He held the opinion that there were no real brahmanas or kshatriyas or vaishyas. All were shudras. "Today brahmanas and kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras, are mere labels. There is utter confusion of varna as I understand it and I wish that all the Hindus will voluntarily call themselves shudras" (53). Gandhi hoped that from this one varna, the other three varnas will gradually emerge purified and equal in status, though differing in occupations.

As mentioned before, Gandhi has been put under fire for his views on Varnashramadharma. Though in actual practice many follow the occupations of their parents there are not many who avow it as the right thing theoretically. Even while they follow the occupations of their fathers not just out of necessity but out of the feeling that it is the best choice for them, they venture to reject the law of varna as Gandhi propounded it. There are others who consider occupational mobility as a condition and sign of progress and so oppose the law of varna considering it highly detrimental to the possibility of social mobility. But these critics fail to take note of the fact that in India today a new kind of caste system is emerging in which the caste and not the individual is recognized as the unit of society and each caste is anxious to promote its own interest (54). This, of course, is fraught with dangerous consequences. On the other hand, Varna, as understood and explained by Gandhi, reveals the law of our being and the duty we should perform and the fulfilment of this law, according to Gandhi, would make life livable, would spread peace and content, end all clashes and conflicts.

VII. 2. 3. Approach to specific issues

The society that Gandhi envisages is an egalitarian, classless, casteless one in which there is no segregation of any sort or hierarchical divisions. As already mentioned the social
philosophy of Gandhi is based on his metaphysics which upholds the basic oneness of the Ultimate Reality and everything that is individuated. As everything in the universe takes its origin from the same source there is no room in this perception for any kind of inequality, discrimination or the feeling of high and low. Indian social philosophy was also based on the same premises but unfortunately in Indian social life this philosophy of monism got reconciled to a very crudely discriminatory social system and this unholy alliance resulted in the perpetuation of heinous crimes and odious atrocities on large sections of people, especially on those stigmatised as the untouchables and women, the weaker sex so-called.

Gandhi, though he claimed himself to be an advaitin and a sanatani Hindu, opposed these immoral and uncivilized social customs. In fact, a true votary of advaita cannot approve of any sort of inequality or discrimination and is duty-bound to fight for the removal of the barriers that separate man from man and thus obstruct the free and full flowering of his potentialities. Therefore, Gandhi made social reform activities also a part of the struggle for political independence and gave priority to the cause of the untouchables and women in his agenda for a social revolution. As a detailed discussion of the way Gandhi understood and tackled the various social problems and fought the social evils is beyond the scope of the present study, what is attempted here is to pick out two major issues viz., untouchability and the oppression of women as representative ones and briefly explain the Gandhian approach to them in order to show how even the solutions to specific social problems prescribed by Gandhi fit into his weltanschauung.

a) The Removal of Untouchability

Untouchability is the religio-social practice that compelled more than one hundred million helpless Hindus of India to live as outcastes away from the habitations of the rest
of the people and to resort only to such occupations as scavenging and removing human excreta, spurned as polluting by the high caste Hindus. "The untouchables were the poorest section of Indian society. Their avenues of employment were strictly limited and they lived apart in unhygienic surroundings on the outskirts of villages and cities" (55). Although the untouchables were Hindus and believed in and worshipped Hindu gods and goddesses they were prohibited from entering Hindu temples and public institutions like schools and hotels etc., were closed to them. It goes without saying that this cruel and inhuman institution of untouchability is inconsistent with non-violence and shall have no place in any civilized social order. So Gandhi considered the fight against untouchability his mission and inseparable from any other activity of his (56).

(i) Open rebel against untouchability

Gandhi says that he was wedded to the work for the eradication of untouchability long before he was wedded to his wife (57). Gandhi had declared that his love for Hinduism is matched only by his love for his wife. But he made it explicitly clear that for the sake of serving the untouchables and fighting for their cause he was willing to give up both his religion and wife. "There were two occasions in our joint life", writes Gandhi. "when there was a choice between working for the untouchables and remaining with my wife and I could have preferred the first" (58). Gandhi told Louis Fischer that it was his conviction that this inhuman boycott of human beings was an excrescence and perversion of Hinduism and he had the courage to say that if it was proved to him that it was an essential part of Hinduism, he for one, would declare himself open rebel against Hinduism itself (59). He had also said "I would far rather that Hinduism died than that untouchability lived" (60).

(ii) Harijan, a comprehensive counter concept

Explaining how and why he abandoned the word untouchable and
adopted the name Harijan which means "a man of God". Gandhi writes:

All religions of the world describe God pre-eminently as the Friend of the friendless, Help of the helpless and Protector of the weak. The rest of the world apart, in India who can be more friendless, helpless or weaker than the forty million or more Hindus of India who are classified as untouchables. If, therefore, anybody of the people can be fitly described as men of God they are surely these helpless and despised people (61).

Ironically enough, there have been accusations that the term Harijan implies "an upper-caste arrogance" and that it is just a "sweet name", meant only to deceive the entire community of untouchables (62).

But it is not difficult to grasp the connotations of the word 'Harijan'. Explaining the comprehensive sense of the term Harijan what Indira Rothermund writes is worth quoting here:

The term Harijan, as used by Gandhi, is in fact more appropriate for a true understanding of the problem. Untouchability, I hardly need point out, is an evil that has a basis not only in the social but also in the religious practices. Gandhi, by using the term Harijan emphasises both equality of all Indians before law and before God. For Gandhi the idea of equality as a purely secular concept is incomplete, for it does not question or enter into a dialogue with the other, more durable mode of thinking and behaviour, namely religious. Untouchability, an extreme and inhuman form of inequality derives its sanction from inhuman religious beliefs and practices. It requires more than a secular concept of equality to challenge it. The use of the term Harijan thus implies the acceptance of not only the assertive, secular power to Harijans but more importantly their claim to human dignity. All persons are created equal by God (as Harijans), and some of them are made unequal by man-made laws (as in this case by the customary laws of the Dharmashastras). Legitimacy of the latter has to be questioned. And to do this a purely positivist and secular concept like 'Dalit' is plainly inadequate. Instead, a counter concept should be rooted in a higher and more universal form of religious sensibility (63).

(iii) A religious issue primarily

Unlike the other social evils untouchability is peculiar to Hindu religious practice and therefore, Gandhi described it as the greatest blot on Hinduism (64). By practising untouchability caste Hindus have reduced Hindu religion to a fetish of outward observance and degraded it to a question of eating and
drinking. accused Gandhi. He asserts on the strength of his understanding of the Hindu scriptures that "Hinduism of the Vedas, the Upanishads. Hinduism of the Bhagavad Gita and of Sankara and Ramanuja contains no warrant for treating a single human being, no matter how fallen, as an untouchable" (65). Thus it is clear that it is the caste Hindus and no one else who are responsible for this crime against humanity and God. Therefore, Gandhi insists that the removal of untouchability is an act of repentance and expiation on the part of the followers of Hindu religion, especially caste Hindus. "To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves" (66). Acharya Kripalani testifies that during the campaign against untouchability when leaders belonging to the higher castes visited the Harijans in their lowly homes they refused to give the leaders water for they believed that it would be 'adharma' - a breach of religious duty - for them to offer water to high-caste people (67). This shows the level of their degradation. Gandhi, therefore, called upon the caste Hindus to take the initiative and make all the sacrifice necessary for the removal of this evil.

Gandhi did not consider the campaign for the removal of untouchability as a political one. On the contrary, it was for him an act of religious reform although he did not deny the political and economic implications of this revolutionary reform and therefore, he did not call up on the untouchables to join in the struggle for the removal of untouchability and the assertion of their rights (68). Gandhi put the onus of this onerous task on the caste Hindus. Kripalani testifies that the response of the caste Hindus to Gandhi's repeated exhortations for a change of heart was not disappointing (69). As Gandhi believed that the best way to win your opponent is not by physical or coercive force but by love, self-suffering and self-sacrifice if need be, the method he suggests for the removal of this evil
made truce, and Gandhi did not rest content with making mer-  
pious appeals to the goodwill of the caste Hindus. He mounted  
a frontal attack on this evil practice by amassing all the  
strength at his command.

(iv) **Satyagraha and constitutional guarantee**

He exhorted the workers against untouchability to oppose it  
wherever they came across it and offer **satyagraha** (70).  
According to Gandhi Harijan Sevaks must offer satyagraha for  
establishing the rights of the Harijans for temple entry, and  
the use of common wells, schools and public roads. The various  
satyagraha campaigns for the removal of the evil of  
untouchability conducted under Gandhi's guidance bear witness to  
the fact that he was uncompromising on his resolve to put an end to  
this obnoxious practice.

Personally, as a symbol of his identification with the  
Harijans, Gandhi started doing scavenging and cleaning the  
lavatories in the Ashram. the work generally set apart for  
Harijans. Gandhi's epic fast of 1932 intended to rouse the  
conscience of caste Hindus is another sign of his empathy with  
Harijans. As is well-known, the effect of the fast, to say the  
least, was tremendous. As Louis Fischer has commented, Gandhi's  
fast touched Hindu India's heart and the Hindu community  
experienced a religious emotional upheaval and as a result of  
this temples were opened to the Harijans. "After this fast",  
writes Louis Fischer, "untouchability forfeited its public  
approval; the belief in it was destroyed. . . . A taboo  
hallowed by custom, tradition and ritual lost its potency" (71).

Gandhi considered **satyagraha** to be the most potent and  
useful weapon for fighting against the evil of untouchability and  
bringing about a lasting solution to it. But he did not rule out  
the need for legal sanctions for eliminating this canker. He  
wanted the constitution of India to abolish untouchability in any
shape and form although he knew fully well that constitutional guarantees will not ensure real justice to the weaker sections (72). As Kripalani has rightly pointed out, "It is also a fact that social evils of long standing, even when removed through legislation take a long time to disappear from the conduct of the people" (73).

(v) Futility of conversion

One of the most significant points that Gandhi emphasised in the question of the removal of untouchability is the futility of religious conversion. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, spokesman and leader of the untouchables and his followers believed that conversion is one of the effective ways of combating the evil of untouchability and therefore, got converted to Buddhism. Christian missionaries, on the other side, converted many untouchables to Christianity under the fond hope that conversion would save them from their age-old social and cultural backwardness and thus put an end to the humiliating discriminations and segregation suffered by them for ages on end. But Gandhi argued that as long as the practice of untouchability continues to exist in Hindu society, a change of religion is not going to make any real change in the social or cultural status of the converts or in the attitude of society in general towards them (74).

It may not be out of place to point out in this connection that the plight of the converted Harijans whether it be to Buddhism, Christianity or any other religion for that matter, remains at the same old miserable level proving Gandhi's rejoinder to be almost prophetic. The only way to save Indian society from this monstrous evil is to rid Hinduism totally of it.

In short, according to Gandhi as untouchability is incompatible with a non-violent social order, the removal of it means love for and sacrifice of the whole world and thus merged into ahimsa (75). It is, indeed, a movement for the realization
of the universal brotherhood of man (76). Although these noble ideals of Gandhi have not been fully realised and untouchability still stalks the length and breadth of India, "there has been a sea change in the situation since Gandhi... Enlightened public opinion is wholly in favour of the Harijans and the latter have learnt to stand up for their rights" (77). Thus it is clear that Gandhi's attempts for the removal of untouchability being indispensable for the creation of a non-violent social order constitute an integral part of his world view.

(b) Women's issues and Gandhi's feminist perspectives

Domination of any kind under whatever guise or pretext it might be, is incompatible with the spirit and structure of the non-violent social order as visualised by Gandhi. So he gave priority to the removal of all such dominations in his programme for the creation of a new social order. That is obviously why, side by side with the problem of the removal of untouchability, he took up the cause of the emancipation of women also, giving it the privilege of preferential treatment. Many a writer has pointed out that Gandhi was a strong advocate of women's rights, right from the beginning of his public life in South Africa and that he played a pivotal role in emancipating the Indian women from the age-old tyrannies of religious and social customs and taboos and the domination of man. Manohman Choudhuri, for example, says: "Gandhi, as if by magic, had brought women to the forefront of public life in India" (78). Thousands and thousands of village women, illiterate and poor, emerged from their age-old seclusions to defy the armed might of the British Empire and played a very positive, crucial and historic role in the success of the Satyagraha campaigns. Bringing out women in their thousands to the forefront of the non-violent struggle for freedom is only a small, though not insignificant, achievement of Gandhi's crusade for the liberation of women. In order to appreciate the full significance of Gandhi's contribution to the
cause of the emancipation of women, we must examine his approach to the question a little more closely.

(i) Rise and fall of the status of women, an overview

It has been established by authentic research studies that during the Vedic period of Hindu civilization women enjoyed free participation in the religious and public life of the times. "Woman was regarded with due respect in every sphere of life, and she was not subject to any of the merciless laws of an unsympathetic society. Even when she overstepped moral laws, she was judged with sympathy", writes one of the acknowledged authorities on the subject (79). But gradually they came to be discriminated against and dominated by men and came to be treated as goods and chattels. In the law book of Manu, the renowned Hindu law-giver between 400 B.C. to 400 A.D. (c), it is stated that women do not deserve freedom at all (80). It can be said with no exaggeration that in course of time the condition of women almost bordered on slavery.

(ii) Suppression of women, a most degrading evil

Gandhi, by proclaiming perfect equality of men and women, rejected the Shastras and smritis (law-books) that were prejudiced against women and claimed to follow the positive elements of the great Vedic tradition in which women were treated as equals. According to Gandhi, "of all the evils that man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking, or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity - to me the female sex, not the weaker sex" (81). Because of his keen awareness of the suppression to which women were subjected Gandhi was full of compassion for them and was ready to forgive even their faults. Writes Gandhi: "Women have been so completely suppressed that in their helplessness they cannot even think. The Ashram, therefore, should adopt a very liberal attitude towards them. This involves many risks. We must take them if we wish to serve women" (82).
Gandhi exhorted his co-workers to ignore the difficulties involved in the attempt to 'uphold the fullest freedom for women' which was their task. "It does not matter if we miss the path or our way, if we stumble, are pricked by thorns or fall down..." (83).

(iii) Equality between sexes

Gandhi's position on women's issues, as Barbara Southard has pointed out, was based on two fundamental concepts: equality between sexes and differentiation of their social roles (84). Gandhi's concept of sexual equality is a corollary of his belief that all life is one. Explaining his basic convictions on this question Gandhi writes:

The soul in both is the same... My opinion is that, just as fundamentally man and woman are one, their problem must be one in essence. The two live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. The one cannot live without the other's active help (85).

Gandhi has made it unequivocally clear that as woman is gifted with equal mental capacities as man, she is entitled to the same right of freedom and liberty as he (86). While emphasising this fundamental equality Gandhi does not ignore the important physical and emotional differences between man and woman.

Nevertheless there is no doubt that at some point there is bifurcation. Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is also equally true that in the form there is a vital difference between the two. Hence the vocations of the two also must be different (87).

(iv) The domestic role of women

It is at this point that Gandhi makes a few very important, yet controversial observations regarding the nature and role of woman. According to Gandhi woman is endowed with certain distinct qualities and temperaments in the strength of which nature intends her to undertake certain special functions.

The duty of motherhood which the vast majority of women will always undertake requires qualities which man need not possess. She is passive, he is active. She is essentially mistress of the house. He is the bread
winner. she is the keeper and distributor of the bread. She is the caretaker in every sense of the term. The art of bringing up the infants of the race is her special and sole prerogative. Without her care the race must become extinct.

The division of the sphere of work being recognized, the general qualities and culture required are practically the same for both the sexes (88).

The emphasis that Gandhi puts on the domestic role of women may prompt some radical feminists to castigate him by calling him a traditionalist who wanted women to be eternally tied down to virtual domestic slavery (89). This criticism springs from the perception of some ultra-radical feminists who consider the institution of family as the root cause and breeding ground of all the inequalities (including male domination) suffered by women. They, therefore, consider their liberation as coterminous with the obliteration of the institution of family.

Gandhi did not accept this point of view. He considered the family a very important social institution which has very significant psycho-social functions to perform. He also believed that the role of the mistress and caretaker of the house is more vital in the real drama of life than what the feminists conjure up. Moreover, it has to be borne in mind that Gandhi was always in favor of and openly supported the claim of women for economic independence (90). He recognized that circumstances may make a married woman work outside the home, although generally Gandhi's position was that man should look to the maintenance of the family while the women should take care of house-hold management. the two thus supplementing and complementing each other's roles (91). Also he advocated a larger role for women in public life - including agitational politics. So there is no reason to consider Gandhi's views on the domestic role of women as either reactionary or retrograde. On the contrary, he shows deep and genuine concern for the cause of women. It is amazing to note how caring and considerate he was for their welfare.
(v) Woman, an incarnation of ahimsa

Gandhi considered women to be the incarnation of ahimsa.

Gandhi wrote in the Harijan:

I have suggested in these columns that woman is the incarnation of ahimsa. Ahimsa means infinite love, which again means infinite capacity for suffering. Who but woman, the mother of man, shows this capacity in the largest measure? She shows it as she carries the infant and feeds it during nine months and derives joy in the suffering involved. What can beat the suffering caused by the pangs of labour? But she forgets them in the joy of creation. Who again suffers daily so that the babe may wax from day to day? Let her transfer that love to the whole of humanity, let her forget that she ever was or can be the object of man's lust. And she will occupy her proud position by the side of man as his mother, maker and silent leader (92).

(vi) Range of understanding of women's problems

Expressing his deep understanding of and sympathy for the suppressed women of India, Gandhi said:

the physique of our girls is ruined through false modesty. We forget that the girls of today are the mothers of tomorrow. At a tender and critical stage in her development when she needs a mother's understanding, love and guidance most, she is given a step-motherly treatment as if she had sinned against society in growing up and must be suppressed. She is made a victim of hide-bound social rules and conventions. She cannot stir out, play, take outdoor exercise. The same about dress. She is made to follow the mode, put in tight laces, which deform the body and stunt her growth. She is kept in ignorance of the basic facts of life and in consequence suffers from various ailments through false modesty. The psychological harm it does is even worse than the physical. She looks grey and old when she should be care-free and happy as a bird. It is a heart-rending spectacle. It in respect of their food, dress and conduct, conversation and reading, study and recreation our girls could be brought up in nature's healthy simplicity and allowed to grow in freedom, untrammeled by anything but by the limits of natural modesty, they would rise to the full height of their stature and once more present us with a galaxy of heroes and saints as India had boasted in the past. I have dreamt of such a race of ideal women who will be India's pride and the guarantee of her future (93).

His correspondence with Mirabehn over the practice of menstruating women having to go into seclusion reveals the minute care he took in matters relating to the problems of women and in ensuring their comfort.

Gandhi was in favour of sex education for children. "To a
girl who had reached the age of puberty I would tell everything about it", says Gandhi. "If a young girl asks about it, I would explain it to her according to her mental capacity" (94). Gandhi was not only a staunch supporter of compulsory education for girls, but was not in favour of formulating a curriculum that will cater to the special needs of the girls and train them to be daughter's share of the family property to be equal to that of the son and the husband's earnings to be joint-property of husband and wife (95). Gandhi's opposition to the customs and practices that subjugated women was total and vehemently uncompromising. Not only did he condemn the brutal custom of child marriage but raised his voice for raising the age of consent in and out of marriage to sixteen even as early as 1925 (96). Also he stood for the right of the girl to choose her husband and to remain unmarried if the girl wishes not to marry at all. Gandhi's compassion for the fallen woman is on a par with of Jesus Christ and he advised that such women be pitied rather than shunned and should be taken back into their families (97).

Gandhi's understanding of the problem of widows was deep as well as moving. He related the problem of early widowhood with the problem of child marriage and argues that child widows should not be considered widows at all because they had never experienced married life (98). He strongly pleaded for widow remarriage, especially of the widowed girl children. He wanted to free the Hindu widows from bearing external marks to indicate their widowhood. When a woman asked Gandhi why a widow should not be allowed to have the red mark on her fore-head that married Hindu women generally wear, Gandhi replied, "I am inclined to think just as a widower does not bear upon his body any indication of the fact that he has lost his wife, so also a widow need not have any external marks indicating her condition. This opinion is grounded only in natural justice and not in the

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imminence of the soul..." (99).

Gandhi’s opposition to the practice of wearing purdha and the obnoxious dowry system is too well known to call for an elaboration. He stood for equality at all levels and wanted to destroy evil of male domination and oppression of women root and branch. Therefore, Gandhi opposed the marriage vow that made a wife accept her husband as God and guru and he prepared a revised formula that omitted this vow and replaced it by one of mutual fidelity (100).

The only question on which one can accuse Gandhi of having made too hard a demand on women is that of birth control. As is well known, Gandhi was strongly opposed to birth control by artificial means. He wanted women to have more self-control than men, to exercise their right to say ‘no’ to their husbands and thus help them to conquer their animal passions (101). But even in such matter, the love and compassion he felt for women made him advise the use of contraceptives in exceptional cases (102).

(vii) Integration of feminine and masculine qualities

Commenting on Gandhi’s position on women’s issues some writers (feminists and others) say that Gandhi was reinterpreting traditional Indian concepts of femininity rather than challenging cultural norms directly (103). Manmohan Choudhuri, on the other hand, argues that Gandhi “did not believe in the traditional stereotypes about the natures of men and women in spite of the fact that he used such terms as ‘active’ and ‘passive’ to characterise men and women” (104). Generally, in most cultures, gentleness, modestly, timidity, compassion etc. are believed to be feminine qualities while it is masculine to be tough, aggressive, courageous, calculating, rational and so on. It may be said that the most important contribution of Gandhi vis-à-vis feminism is that through his campaigns for the emancipation of women, he demolished this stereotype and helped women to cultivate the qualities of courage, self-assertion and
self-determination while the creed of non-violence helped men of combine gentleness with courage, tough commonsense with compassion and to give more free play to their tender feelings (105). Just as Gandhi combines in himself the best of both the masculine and feminine qualities of called, he sought to amalgamate them in the men and women of India in order to make them 'whole' and integrated beings. It is through the efforts of such integrated persons that the creation of a non-violent social order is possible and Gandhi envisaged a major and dominant role for women in building the non-violent society of his dreams.

VII. 2. 4. Social order vis-a-vis the ultimate goal

As mentioned in the beginning the two problems, removal of untouchability and emancipation of women, were taken up for consideration as illustrative examples only. The point that is intended to be driven home is that a society may be said to be non-violent and thus conducive to the total development of the personality of all its members and to the fulfilment of the ultimate goal of life namely self-realisation only when evils like untouchability, segregation, class and caste distinctions, colour prejudice etc., are eliminated from it and the rights of all members, especially of women and other oppressed sections are recognised and ensured. There are other conditions also to be fulfilled for the realisation of the dream of a Sarvodaya social order and they are related to the economic, political and educational structures of the social order and in the subsequent articles these points are taken up for discussion.

Article 3

THE STRUCTURE OF A NON-VIOLENT ECONOMY

What is being attempted in this article is a brief enumeration of Gandhi's views on the nature and organization of the economic system that is compatible with the principles of non-violence. It will be a simple and direct elucidation of the
premises and principles of Gandhian economics. While care will be taken not to add to the already existing 'ethico-mystical mish-mash' that passes for Gandhian economics, the aim, at the same time, will be not to translate the Gandhian concepts into a highly technical conceptual framework familiar and acceptable to the modern social scientists and economists (106). The purpose of the elucidation will be to show how Gandhi's economic ideas fit into and constitute an integral part of his world-view.

VII. 3. 1. The approach

Gandhi never claimed to be an economist. On the contrary, while addressing the Economic Society of Muir College, Allahabad on 22 December, 1916, he admitted his limitations and said: "Frankly and truly I know little of economics as you naturally understand it..." (107). It is of course, an understatement. Commenting on this confession of nescience of the science of economics two famous economists state:

an examination of his above mentioned lecture clearly points to what he knew rather than what he did not know. He was not interested in the scope and method of economic science as we economists 'naturally understand it'. Rather, he worked for a whole life time on articulating the principles of an alternative and 'more real' human economy, centering on the very themes outlined in his lecture: the lack of correlation between material expansion and genuine progress, the need for an economic-cum-ethics that will enable moral growth and dignity for all, the fallacy of seeking happiness in individual acquisitive behaviour, and the need for encouraging people to seek a life rich in self-esteem and genuine meaning (108).

This alternative economic paradigm, according to the renowned economists, is rich in insight and relevance for for the developed and developing economics, as well as for contemporary economic theory (109).

Three points which are basic to the understanding of Gandhi's approach to economics need to be emphasised here in order to put the survey of Gandhi's views on economics in perspective. First, as J.B. Kripalani has rightly pointed out, Gandhi's economics has to be studied from the view point of his
moral and spiritual principles and ideals and also from the conditions that existed and still exist in India (110). Second, Gandhi does not recognize the separation of economics from ethics and what he wanted to achieve in the economic field is the ethical ordering of the economic life of society and therefore, his approach to economic problems and the language he uses in the discussion of economic questions are not that of a specialist but of a moralist and a reformer. It is the language of the common man (111). Third, Gandhi considers economics as the constituent of a larger indivisible whole, and not an independent human activity having its own exclusive operative laws. In the light of these, let us proceed to examine the economic ideas of Gandhi.

VII. 3. 2. Economics and ethics

Any economic system is concerned with the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of material goods and personal services which are necessary to satisfy man's wants. The science of economics attempts to determine what is valuable at a given time by studying the relative exchange values of goods and services. Economics is, therefore, the most clearly value-dependent and normative among the social sciences. Its models and theories will always be based on a certain value system and on a certain view of human nature; on a body of assumptions that E.F. Schumacher calls 'meta-economics' because it is rarely included explicitly in contemporary economic thought" (112).

The science of economics as Gandhi found it in the beginning of the twentieth century was "free from all values except those of the market"; it was viewed as "an autonomous logical system unconcerned with human beings except as workers and capitalists" (113). The divorce of economics from moral values which set in right from the inception of economics as a science nearly two centuries ago had reached a critical point when Gandhi examined the working of this 'dismal science'.

Why did this divorce take place? The economists, in their misguided attempt to make economics as exact science like the physical sciences, consistently avoided non-economic factors and
the issues of unstated values, because values always disprove theories.

Whenever the question of values was brought in economists rejected the challenge and pushed out values as belonging to some other field of analysis. Even earlier, Adam Smith, the father of modern economics, desperately tried to deal with both (facts and values) but could no link the two. The questions that he asked in his Moral Sentiments were left out in his Wealth of Nations despite the fact that he waited for years to publish the latter, in order to find in it a place for ethical issues (114).

Commenting on the shedding of the non-economic contents from economics, especially by Adam Smith, Gandhi wrote:

you know how Adam Smith in his Wealth of Nations after laying down certain principles according to which economic phenomena are governed, went on to describe certain other things which constitute the 'disturbing factor' and prevented economic laws from having free play. Chief among these was the 'human element'. Now it is this human element on which the entire economics of Khadi rests; and human selfishness. Adam Smith's 'pure economic motive' constitutes 'the disturbing factor' that has got to be overcome (115).

Thus it becomes evident that Gandhi wanted to reinstate the human element and the value factor into economics and thus achieve the integration of philosophy and the science of economics which is considered to be a felt-need of the times.

The economic philosophy that was gaining ascendancy not only in the West but throughout the world may be called 'economism' which is based on value premises of which the central core is materialism defined in terms of raising the standard of living or maximising consumption and thereby optimising the pattern of production (116). In other words, with its basic focus on material wealth and physical comfort it was upholding sensate values and attempting to legitimise unlimited consumption and greed. Gandhi had no difficulty in identifying this divorce of economics from ethics as the root cause of the general degradation to Western civilization. So, naturally he emphasised the ethical content of the economic activities as the foundational principle of his economics. "I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and
ethics. Economics that hurts moral well-being of any individual or nation is immoral and therefore, sinful”, says Gandhi (117). Later he said:

true economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just a true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates Mammon worship, and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest and is indispensable for a decent life (118).

Thus, Gandhi questions the basic premise of mainstream economic that fully articulated and formal systems of economic theory are possible only on the basis of an assumption that the economic aspects of human life are completely separable and distinct from such values and emotions as love, altruism, hope, creativity, piety and anything else that is not an expression of the acquisitive spirit. Gandhi rejects the assumption of that economic values can be considered apart from moral values and “in effect denies not merely that economic man is as he has been described by economists but the very idea that there is any such thing as economic man. His economics is better described as an economic philosophy that as as economic theory” (119).

It is clear, thus that the main reason why Gandhi denounced modern economics is the fact that it ignores and disregards moral values and promotes instead acquisitiveness and vulgar consumerism. "The first principle of economics", according to Edgeworth, one of the founders of modern economics, "is that every agent is actuated only by self-interest" (120). This dogma, technically known as the principle of maximising behavior is held fast to by all modern economists of the conventional school. This view based on the perception that the unlimited character of human want is the sole determinant of economic activity and its unrestricted satisfaction is the index of human progress is totally unacceptable to Gandhi. It will no be an
exaggeration to say that the root cause of the crisis in which humanity finds itself today is this perverted notion of human nature and progress. Gandhi foresaw this and denounced this view of economic progress in unequivocal terms. "I do not believe that multiplication of wants and machinery contrived to supply them is taking the world a single step nearer its goal... I whole-heartedly detest this mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and to go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction" (121).

The consequences of following the modern path of economic progress is as clear as day light today. It has created problems like acute resource depletion, energy crisis, environmental hazards and eco degradation, cut-throat competition for appropriation of scarce resources and raw materials and also for gaining monopoly over market, all leading to conflicts at regional and international levels which in turn result in arms-race and war. Gandhi, with his 'acute understanding' of the problems confronting mankind and with his capacity for intuitive perception, could foresee the likely turn of events and therefore, as early as 1909 warned humanity: "the mind is a restless bird, the more it gets the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied. Therefore, the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare" (122). Gandhi disilludes those who conceive of modernity and progress in terms of high standard of living measured by conspicuous consumption, by defining true civilization as follows: "Civilization in the real sense of the term consists not in the multiplication but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants" (123).

VII. 3. 3. Limitation of wants

This brings us to one of the major tenets of Gandhian economics, viz., the limitation of wants. This is, understandably, one of the most grossly misunderstood principles
of Gandhi's economic thought. Gandhi was severely lambasted by thinkers and quacks in and outside India for placing the principle of voluntary simplicity or limitation of wants at the top of his economic philosophy. Nehru, for example, found in Gandhi's idealization of simple, peasant life an opposition to modernization and writes reprovingly:

I have almost a horror of it and instead of submitting to it myself I want to drag out even the peasantry from it not to urbanization but to the spread of urban facilities to rural areas. Far from this life giving me true happiness it would be almost as bad as imprisonment for me. What is there in the 'Man with the Hoe' to idealise over? Crushed and exploited for innumerable generations, he is only little removed from the animals who keep him company (124).

In one of 'the most unkindest cut of all', Nehru derides Gandhi's simplicity verging on asceticism: "Gandhi has been compared to the medieval Christian saints and much that he says seems to fit in with this. It does not fit in at all with modern psychological experience and methods" (125).

Believing that Gandhi, by advocating the limitation of wants, was glorifying poverty Arthur Lewis observes: "not all nationalist politicians favour economic development. Some like Gandhi resisted Westernism and desire on the contrary, to return to old ways" (126).

The basic mistake of these unfounded criticisms lies in the fallacious belief that progress and development consist in the ever growing multiplication of wants and the production of more and more goods to satisfy them. But Gandhian emphasis lies elsewhere.

Gandhi believed in the total development of the human being in his physical, mental, moral and spiritual dimensions. He believed that poverty was degrading and that adequate economic progress was essential to satisfy the economic needs of man. Once this was achieved, instead of continuing to aspire for higher standards of living man must attempt to develop his mental, moral and spiritual qualities (127).

Gandhi's objection to the idea of the multiplication of wants and his insistence on their limitation were based on
his conviction that the former obstructed while the latter facilitated the moral and spiritual development of the individuals which is the highest Gandhian criterion for the acceptability of any human activity. Writes Gandhi:

A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore, the ideal of creating unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they do not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated (128).

Emphasising the message, he writes again: "The less you possess, the less you want, the better you are. The better for what? Not for the enjoyment of this life, but for enjoyment of personal service to the fellow-beings; service which you dedicate yourself, body, soul and mind" (129). One is likely to misunderstand a statement like this unless he is familiar with the total body of Gandhi's economic thought. One may even mistake him to be preaching a pie-in-the-sky sermon and extolling poverty. But it is far from the truth. To those who are advocating material abundance Gandhi said:

If by abundance you mean every one having plenty to eat and drink and to clothe himself with, enough to keep his mind trained and educated. I should be satisfied. But I should not like to pack more stuffs in my belly than I can digest and more things than I can usefully use. But neither do I want poverty, penury, misery, dirt and dust in India (130).

Vehemently opposed as Gandhi was to artificial multiplication of wants, equally strong was his repugnance to the grinding poverty of the masses. According to him, the economic constitution of India and the world, "should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet" (131). Gandhi has said more than once that "to a people
famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages" (132). He also adds: "I dare not take before them (starving masses) the message of God I may well place before the dog over there the message of God as before those hungry millions who have no lusture in their eyes and whose only God is bread" (133). Any number of such telling passages can be cited to substantiate Gandhi's consistent and committed opposition to poverty. He considered poverty to be materially harmful and morally degrading. That is why he said, "No one has ever suggested that grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation" (134).

Thus, it is evident that what Gandhi idealised was simplicity and not poverty. Poverty, he detested with all his heart and fought with all the might at his command. And the removal of poverty is the first item on his economic agenda. It is clear thus that what Gandhi aimed at was the total eradication of poverty. And he believed that limitation of wants is an indispensable condition for the realisation of his objective. As a true socialist Gandhi also advocated a simultaneous levelling up of the poor and a levelling down of the rich for the Gandhian economic goal of the welfare of all cannot be achieved either in a Western model affluent society or in a society groaning under the burden of abject and grinding poverty as seen in the Indian villages.

That multiplication of wants is inconsistent with high thinking and the total development of individuals and is obstructive to self-realisation is not the only reason why Gandhi opposed it and advocated simplicity instead. Gandhi with his deep insight into human nature and with the evidence collected from the study human history saw that material abundance did not lead to contentment and happiness. It is claimed by the science of economics that wants are multiplied
and production optimised thereto in order to provide satisfaction to the human individuals and thus to keep them happy. But Gandhi says that, "even if the paradise of material satisfactions which they envisage as their final goal were realised on earth, it would not bring mankind either contentment or peace" (135). In the Hind Swaraj (as early as 1909) Gandhi had made this point explicitly clear.

The more we indulge in our passions the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors therefore, set a limit to indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich or unhappy because he is poor. The rich are often seen to be unhappy, the poor to be happy (136).

Thus in Gandhi's view man can attain real happiness only through the limitation of wants and the acceptance of voluntary simplicity. That is why he says:

Man falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plain living and high thinking the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. History gives ample proof of this. Man's happiness really lies in contentment. He who is discontented, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. And there is no slavery equal to that of the desires (137).

Gandhi advocates simplicity and limitation of wants not only for individuals but also for society as a whole. "What is true for the individual is true for society," says he (138). Just as Gandhi visualises for the individual a simple but ennobled life that lends contentment and happiness, in the case of society he visualises not an affluent society wading and wallowing in material abundance like the Western industrial-urban society, but a self-sufficient, no-poverty society based on non-violence and voluntary co-operation ensuring a dignified and peaceful existence for all (139). That the pursuit of the higher goals of life is possible only in such a society is the reason why Gandhi sets it as a social ideal.

VII. 3. 4. Basic needs strategy.

Another reason why Gandhi insisted on the limitation of wants is that it is inseparably related to the achievement
of the goal of Sarvodaya, the welfare of all. Though in the paradigm of the multiplication of wants, the greatest good of the greatest number is promised, what is really fulfilled at best is 'the greatest good' of the blessed few. While a few become fabulously rich, the vast majority are doomed to perish in abject poverty. While, on the one side, the gap between the rich and the poor in a particular country widens, on the other side, the gulf that separates the rich nations and the poor nations becomes menacingly unbridgeable.

The rosy promises of the escalation of affluence either through trickle down effect or through percolation are totally belied and falsified; centres of affluence appear as patches of riches in the vast and almost endless deserts of poverty—a ridiculous caricature indeed! The greatest good or welfare visualised in Sarvodaya is not the material abundance or affluence as promised in other economic ideologies. Gandhi steers clear of both affluence and poverty. He knew only too well that it is impossible to raise the standard of living of the rest of the world population to the level of affluence of an average European or American simply because the earth does not have enough natural resources to achieve this. As Gandhi said, earth has enough to satisfy everyone's legitimate needs but not anyone's greed. Given the finite nature of earth's resources, any attempt to go on artificially multiplying human wants is doomed to failure (140). Thus the limitation of wants becomes a sine qua non for sustaining the earth's ecosystem.

Moreover, as we have already pointed out, undifferentiated and exponential economic growth, according to Gandhi, is undesirable as it is bound to be exploitative and violent and therefore, cannot lead to the establishment of a classless, egalitarian social order. In short, in order to realise the goal of sarvodaya the emphases must be on (a) the
basic needs of the people and not on conspicuous consumption and (b) all people, especially the weaker and deprived sections of the population and not the elite who occupy the higher rungs of the social hierarchy (141).

Thus although in the Gandhian paradigm the supreme consideration is man, it is important to note that it is the last man (unto this last) that Gandhi cares most and by the last man Gandhi means the Indian villager who is the true representative of the people in India. This naturally leads us to what Amritananda Das calls "the central problem" of Gandhian economic analysis, viz., the problem of rural-urban conflict and village decay in underdeveloped economies (142).

VII. 3. 5. Villagism

As pointed out at the outset of this article Gandhi's economic ideas can be best understood in the light of the socio-economic conditions that existed in India during his times and that still exist in most of the underdeveloped countries of the world. Gandhi's opposition to the multiplication of wants and the creation of an urban-industrial society is linked to his "love of the Indian village and its traditional way of life which he felt was as near an approximation as possible that could be found in history for the functioning of a non-violent society" (143). A glance through his writings is enough to convince anyone that "Gandhi was drawn by his vision of a rural civilization where men and women in small groups would, by their activity, be self-sufficient in meeting their elemental needs and yet inter-dependent for many others in which dependence in necessary"(144). Gandhi wanted independent India to be a union of such self-sufficient but inter-dependent village republics.

Time there was, when, known to the outside world as 'the Golden Ind', India through a proper integration of agriculture and industry achieved very high levels of material well-being.
The 'hoary civilization' that the foreigners found on the Indian soil furnished the country not only with political system, but with social and domestic institutions of the most ramified description (145). It was, in fact, the unique institution of the Indian village that served as the bulwark against all disorders and held the torch of this universal civilization high.

The ancient Indian villages were self-sufficient, affluent and autonomous. The integration between agriculture, village handicrafts and industries provided full employment to almost the entire population. Agriculture was not oriented towards making profits. The production of food materials for the local people and raw-materials for the local industries was the sole objective of agriculture. Farming was not a business but a way of life. The type of farming in vogue was subsistence or conservation farming and not intensive and large scale farming which amounts to a virtual rape of the soil. Village handicrafts, cottage and other small scale industries depended mainly on locally available raw materials. Production was need-based and not on a mass scale as in the mechanised industrial sector.

There was a studied attempt at all levels to make life as simple as possible. As Gandhi has said, our ancestors had set a limit to indulgence. People were not fond of luxuries and pleasures. Co-operation was emphasised and life-corroding competition scrupulously avoided. The kings and their swords were considered to be inferior to the sword of ethics and the rulers were considered to be inferior to Rishis and Fakirs (146). The testimony of Sir. William Wedderburn, Bart., is worth quoting here:

The Indian villages has thus for centuries remained a bulwark against public disorder and the home of simple domestic and social virtues. No wonder, therefore, that philosophers and historians have always dwelt lovingly on this ancient institution

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which is the natural social unit and the best type of rural life: self-contained, industrious, peace loving, conservative in the best sense of the word . . . I think you will agree with me that there is much that is picturesque and attractive in the glimpse of social and domestic life in an Indian village. It is a harmless and happy form of human existence. Moreover, it is not without good practical outcome (147).

It was this rural civilization whose economic organisation was a happy and balanced blend of subsistence farming and sustainable industries that Gandhi admired and projected as a model. It was not difficult for Gandhi to see that the only way to save the impoverished rural people who constitute more than eighty percent of the total population was to refurbish and regenerate the system of village economy in a large way. It must be made clear that what Gandhi visualised was not a revival of the ancient village system as such but a modified, purified and modernised form of it that will serve the needs and aspirations of the rural people of India. Gandhi writes:

I would say that if the village perishes India will perish too. India will no more be India. Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others” (148).

The Indian village system depicted above was battered down by “English steam and English Free Trade . . . by blowing up their economic basis” (149). British domination of India meant economic exploitation of the worst kind, especially of the village through industrialization and urbanisation. Commenting on British exploitation of India Gandhi writes:

When I read Dutt's Economic History of India, I wept, and as I think of it again my heart sickens. It is machinery that has impoverished India. It is difficult to measure the harm that Manchester has
done to us. It is due to Manchester that Indian handicraft has all but disappeared (150).

Industrialization naturally led to the pauperization of the villages, mass unemployment, and exploitation of villages by towns and cities. It has, therefore, been rightly pointed out that in his very strong reaction against modern industrial civilization and in his idealization of the village as the basis of a non-violent social order Gandhi was greatly influenced by the distress and pauperization he had seen in the Indian villages and the desperate exodus to urban areas that this brought about, all largely as a result of the impact of modern industry brought into India under British rule (151). So Gandhi was highly critical of industrialism and rejected it saying that it could create more problems than it could solve. He enumerated the evils of industrialization with scientific precision and prophetic foresight at a time when the entire world was caught in its magic spell.

VII. 3. 6. Limits to industrialization

The purpose of the discussion in this section is not to give a detailed analysis of the reasons why Gandhi condemned and rejected Western model industrialization, but only to highlight a few of them which will illustrate how his views on industrialization form an integral part of his world-view. Industrialization is projected by its protagonists as the only way to solve man's economic problems. But as has already been pointed out, Gandhi was far-sighted enough to understand that it would create more problems than it would solve and therefore, he rejected it as early as 1909 (152).

First and foremost, the very philosophy that underlies industrialization was unacceptable to Gandhi as it ignored the moral and spiritual aspects of the human individual. Secondly, industrialization owes its very existence to exploitation (which
for Gandhi is another name for violence). It involves exploitation of the underdeveloped countries by the industrialised countries, of the rural areas by the urban areas, of the weak by the strong, of the underprivileged by the privileged and of Nature by man. The end result will be, as pointed out earlier, economic rat-race and unhealthy competition for raw materials and market leading to eco-destruction, conflicts and war. Thirdly, as industrialisation has to depend upon large scale and highly sophisticated technology it throws innumerable people out of job for the sake of what they call efficiency, leading to mass unemployment. The consequences of this backwash effect are too plain to require further elucidation. In underdeveloped countries like India, this has generated not only economic but also social, political and psychic problems that have become almost chronic. Citing the Puerto Rico experience where the economic development programme had been unusually vigorous and successful but which threw a progressively larger number of people out of employment every succeeding year, Schumacher points out that India is an equally powerful illustration "where highly ambitious five year plans regularly show a greater volume of unemployment at the end of the five year period than at the beginning..." (153). Fourthly, as large-scale industries require heavy capital investment, it would be far beyond the capacities of the third-world countries to follow this path of industrialisation without bartering away their economic and political independence to foreign capitalists and/or multi-national corporations.

In short, according to Gandhi, industrialisation of the Western model, (which at present has turned out to be the industrial-military complex) is least suited to the socio-economic conditions of India and hence unacceptable. Moreover, it does not fit in either with the ideal social order that Gandhi
has visualised or with the final goal that he has set for mankind to strive after. That is why he proposes a new economic organization of society which can fulfil the economic aspirations of the people and at the same time lead to their moral and spiritual development.

VII. 3. 7. The question of size in industry and technology

The chief concern behind Gandhi's economic programme was to device a method for mitigating the grinding poverty of the Indian masses. The typical condition of the poor in India was that they were under-employed or totally unemployed. Therefore, Gandhi felt that the first thing to do for them was to provide them with employment and the only way to do this was to bring into existence millions of new work places in the rural areas and small towns. As Schumacher has pointed out, that modern industry, as it has arisen in the developed countries, cannot possibly fulfil this task should be perfectly obvious. It has arisen in societies which are rich in capital and short of labour and therefore cannot possibly be appropriate for societies short of capital and rich in labour (154).

Gandhi did not accept modern industrial method as the best way to provide people with employment. So he says:

mechanisation is good when hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as is the case in India. . . . The way to take work to the villages is not through mechanisation but that it lies through revival of the industries they have hitherto followed (155).

In other words, Gandhi wanted to substitute mass production with production by the masses. According to him mass production is a technical term for production by the fewest possible number through the aid of highly complicated machinery. "I have said to myself that that is wrong. My machinery must be of the most elementary type which I can put in the homes of the millions" (156). It was with the intention of solving the twin problems of poverty and unemployment by putting the most

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elementary type machinery in the homes of the millions that
Gandhi tried to revive the Swadeshi movement and launched Khadi
in a big way.

As cloth is next only to food (which of course, is univer-
sally accepted as the most basic of human needs) Gandhi took
up production of cloth as the first industry in his Constructive
Programme. He had another reason for doing so. He knew that
before the introduction of the power mills every home in India
produced its own yarn to make cloth and thus, serving as aux-
iliary to agriculture, provided full employment to all (157).
"At one time our national economics was this", says Gandhi. "that
just as we produced our own corn and consumed it, so did we
produce our own cotton, spin it in our own homes and wear the
clothes woven by our weavers from our own yarn. . . ."
(158).
According to Gandhi the best way to provide work to the masses in
the Indian situation is the revival of khadi (hand spinning and
hand weaving) and other cottage and village industries which will
cater to the basic needs of the masses. It is important to
note that Gandhi always emphasised the complementary roles of
khadi and other village industries such as hand-grinding, hand-
pounding, soap making, paper making, match making, tanning, oil
pressing etc. Gandhi says: "Khadi is the sun of the village
solar system. The planets are the various industries which can
support khadi in turn for the heat and the sustenance they derive
from it" (159). Underscoring the main thrust of his argument in
favour of khadi and village industries Gandhi says: "the sole
claim advanced on its (hand-spinning and hand-weaving) behalf is
that it alone offers an immediate, practicable, and permanent
solution of that problem of problems that confronts India, viz.,
the enforced idleness for nearly six months in the year of an
overwhelming majority of India's population, owing to lack of
supplementary occupation to agriculture and the chronic
starvation of the masses that result therefrom" (160).

Gandhi had other reasons also for advocating khadi and village industries and handicrafts for the solution of the economic problems of India. The most notable of them is the significance of the Charkha. For Gandhi the charkha was the symbol of a technology that is simple, comprehensible even to the illiterate villagers and environment-friendly, or eco-friendly. As is well-known, Gandhi was against the craze for labour saving machines and giant technology, not only because they displace labour and create more unemployment but also because they enslave, dehumanise and alienate the workers as well as the consumers, creating serious psychic and moral problems. So he stood for what is called appropriate technology, or technology with a human face, as Schumacher calls it, which is free from the above evils (161). Enumerating the various advantages of khadi and the charkha Gandhi says:

Khaddar does not seek to destroy all machinery but it does regulate its use and check its weedy growth. It uses machinery for the service of the poorest in their own cottages. The wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery (162).

In the Gandhian system of production technology must satisfy three major conditions. (1) Technology must increase the productivity of the worker. (2) Technology must not replace the worker. (3) The worker must have complete control of the technology (163). These stringent conditions are elegantly fulfilled by the charkha. This exquisite piece of machinery, as Gandhi calls it, creates co-operation and eliminates competition, it breeds love and humility and eliminates greed and self-aggrandizement.

The message of the spinning wheel is much wider than its circumference. Its message is one of simplicity, service of mankind, living as not to hurt others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant (164).
VII. 3. 8. Decentralisation

Khadi and village industries stand for a decentralised economic system and can promote the economic and moral regeneration of the masses of India. Centralised industry, besides the other evils it generates, leads to the concentration of economic power in the hands of a few which in turn results in the concentration of political power and its consequent abuses. As a result of the concentration of the economic and political power the people lose control over the means and modes of production as well as on the manner of distribution and thus they are reduced to a state of utter dependency (165). This is incompatible with non-violence and hence cannot find a place in a non-violent social order. So Gandhi advocates decentralisation as a remedy for the evils of industrialism. "... Moreover, Khadi mentality means decentralisation of the production and distribution of the necessaries of life. Therefore, the formula so far evolved is, every village to produce all its necessaries and a certain percentage in addition for the requirements of the cities" (166). HINTING at the implications of insisting on decentralisation, Gandhi went on to add subsequently:

I suggest that, if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralise many things. Concentration cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force. Simple homes from which there is nothing to take away require no policing; the palaces of the rich must have strong guards to protect them against dacoity. So must huge factories. Rurally organised India will run less risk of foreign invasion than urbanised India, well equipped with military, naval and air forces (167).

The advantages of decentralised production are many and varied. It is based on locally available resources and is intended to satisfy the basic needs of the local population. It uses appropriate technology and depends chiefly on renewable sources of energy. It reduces the exploitation of men and nature to the minimum. Thus it is free from most of the evils

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associated with the neo-classical mode of production and distribution and promotes the economic and moral growth of the individuals.

Gandhi knew that the goal of Sarvodaya can be achieved only if the economic system is decentralised and diffused, organised on small scale and local basis and individuals are made the essential ingredient of the economic process, determining its nature and character and tone and temper (168). That is why he stressed the role of khadi, cottage industries and other handicrafts as they would satisfy the conditions necessary for the realisation of his economic goals. It is important to note here that the need for a decentralised order has been subsequently emphasised by such eminent economists and thinkers as Gunnar Myrdal, E.F. Schumacher, Wilfred Welloch, Bertrand Russell, Aldous Huxley, Herbert Marcuse et. al., and that decentralisation has been included in the manifestoes of such groups belonging to the New Age movement as the German Greens.

VII. 3. 9. Integration of small and large

The depiction of Gandhi's ideas on decentralisation would be incomplete if it is not mentioned that Gandhian economics is not based entirely on handicrafts and cottage industries. Gandhi was not against large scale industries per se. On the other hand, he admitted its due role and significance. He visualised a balanced and organic relationship between the two sectors.

In fact, cottage and large scale industries were not competing alternatives but complementary and helpful to each other. Small scale production and large industries would have to be developed in such a manner that each sector will provide those supplies which cannot be produced by the other. Besides, each sector will help the other by supplying certain requirements and taking in some of its output (169).

Elaborating on the complementary role of small and large industries as envisaged by Gandhi, the author continues:
Gandhi was ready to accept modern machinery and heavy industry in a situation as obtaining in India provided this would serve the needs of small units in the villages by supplying infrastructural facilities and essential machines and tools. But heavy industry would not be allowed under any circumstances to produce the elementary requirements of man and replace bread-labour. These are the essential conditions for ensuring the economic freedom of the village community. If machinery could be employed without jeopardising the freedom and dignity of man and the self-reliance of the villages, Gandhi had no objection to mechanisation of production even at the level of the villages (170).

In short, Gandhi wants industrialisation to be so well planned as not to destroy but to subserve village and village crafts. It is in this perspective that we must situate such statements of Gandhi as "I do visualise electricity, ship building, iron works, machine-making and the like existing side by side with village handicrafts" (171). But Gandhi wanted such industries of public utility to be owned by the state and used entirely for the benefit of the people and not of the profiteers (172). To sum up, Gandhi accepted large scale industries against the following severe condition:

They must not deprive people of employment, they must not exploit the villages or compete with village crafts, they must help the village artisan to reduce his drudgery and improve his efficiency. They should not tend to make atrophied the limbs of man. They must not lead to monopoly or concentration of wealth power in a few hands and they must not lead to exploitation, national or international. And when involving large capital or large number of employees they must be owned by the state and administered wholly for public good (173).

In order to grasp the full significance of Gandhi's idea of decentralisation we must consider it in the light of his total philosophy. As Gandhi writes:

The end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth. I use the adjective moral as synonymous with spiritual. This end can be achieved under decentralisation. Centralisation as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society (174).

Another notable feature of this system is the importance given to manual labour. Although in large scale industries
Inb<tur S~VIII<J devices are used the workers in them are put to heavy physiological and psychological strain resulting in serious personality disorders which can be summed up by the word "alienation". In industrial societies the transformation from work-orientation to consumption-orientation has brought about the loss of autonomy of the individual, so much so that it often degenerates into psychopathic delinquency or disorientation or psychosis bordering on paranoia (175). Gandhi viewed manual labour as having a vital role to play in order to get over the tide of alienation (176). As we discussed the different aspects of bread labour in the previous chapter it is not the purpose here to dilate on them except to point out that to Gandhi labour is not a disutility as economists generally portray it. According to Gandhi labour has four components.

(a) bread-labour which is a kind of minimum physical labour which must be performed by everybody from philosopher to ordinary labourers; (b) earning labour for a living as is normally understood in economics; (c) as an instrument of self-actualization; (d) as a method of service to others. Once this four-fold view of labour is accepted no degree of division of labour can really dehumanise man totally (177).

VII. 3. 10. Doctrine of Trusteeship

The question of the ownership of the means of production has been a bone of contention ever since the inception of the principle of private ownership of property. In fact, the chief, if not only, difference between the two major contending economic systems - capitalist and Marxian socialist - is that of ownership. While capitalism upholds private ownership, Marxian socialism rejects it and advocates state ownership. What is unique about Gandhian economic theory is that Gandhi does not accept the concept of ownership as such whether it be private or state. He considered both as equally exploitative and hence inconsistent with non-violence. So in tune with his basic tenets of non-possession and non-stealing
Gandhi formulated the theory of Trusteeship in order to save society "from the scylla and charybdis of rampant capitalism and bureaucratic socialism" (178). Gandhi claimed that Trusteeship would, perhaps, be his most lasting contribution.

Granted that private ownership is to be abolished in order to realise the goal of Sarvodaya, the question arises: how do we achieve it? As Gandhi did not believe in the use of force or violence for achieving any noble objective, he did not advocate the expropriation of property through violent means as advocated by the other opponents of private ownership. On the contrary, Gandhi prescribed Trusteeship which combines the positive elements of both private enterprise and social ownership. As V.K.R.V. Rao points out:

Gandhi evolved his theory of Trusteeship not only on his deep religious conviction that everything belongs to God and therefore, a human being can hold either his property or his talents only as a trustee, but also on a number of practical considerations. He knew that to dispossess the men of property or of talent by force was bound to involve class war, hatred, proletarian dictatorship, an all powerful and coercive state, and the consequent elimination of all hope of creating a non-violent society. He also felt that many men who had acquired property had some special abilities for increasing production and many men of talent had exceptional contributions to make and, therefore, to destroy them by force may lead to much less of production and would be like killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. Hence his emphasis on persuading them to function as trustees rather than dispossessing them by force, of their income or wealth (179).

So Gandhi advised the owners of property to consider themselves as trustees of the property which really belonged to the whole society and manage it accordingly, "taking just that much that they needed for their own upkeep and use the rest for the good of society" (180).

Gandhi knew that just by giving an opportunity to the capitalists, they may not relinquish voluntarily their property rights and act as trustees. He, therefore, wanted the power of Satyagraha and state legislative action to be used for getting
the rich to change their attitude. Gandhi wanted the tenants and the workers to know that without their active co-operation the rich will not be able either to accumulate or retain their wealth. So he strongly recommended the use of non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience i.e., Satyagraha, as the infallible means for persuading and pressurising the rich to accept trusteeship in public interest. He also warned the rich that if they did not become trustees of their own accord, they would court destruction (181). "The present power of zamindars, the capitalists and rajas can hold sway only so long as the common people do not realize their strength. If the people non-co-operate with the evil of zamindari or capitalism, it must die of inaniation" (182).

In order to remove all doubts and speculations that hovered over the concept of trusteeship, the Trusteeship Formula was drawn up and published.

It reads:

1. Trusteeship provides a means of transforming the present capitalist order of society into an egalitarian one. It gives no quarter to capitalism, but gives the present owning class a chance of reforming itself. It is based on the faith that human nature is never beyond redemption.

2. It does not recognize any right of private ownership of property except so far as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.

3. It does not exclude legislative regulation of the ownership and use of wealth.

4. Thus, under State-regulated trusteeship, an individual will not be free to hold or use his wealth for selfish satisfaction or in disregard of the interest of society.

5. Just as it is proposed to fix a decent minimum living wage, even so limit should be fixed for the maximum income that
could be allowed to any person in society. The difference between such minimum and maximum incomes should be reasonable and equitable and variable from time to time so much so that the tendency would be towards the obliteration of the difference.

6. Under the Gandhian economic order the character of production will be determined by social necessity and not by personal whim or greed (183).

A diligent perusal of the above formula will convince anyone about the validity of Gandhi's claim that Trusteeship theory was likely to be his most lasting contribution to posterity. Although Gandhi did not leave us an elaborately worked out model of trusteeship, in the light of the above formula and the numerous other clarifications he made, a model can be constructed. Gandhi was prepared to concede the legal ownership of the trusteeship concern to the erstwhile owner and also the right to propose the name of the successor. But he laid down the condition that the choice must be finalised by the state. "The choice", said Gandhi, "should be given to the original owner, who becomes the first trustee, but it must be finalised by the state. Such arrangement puts a check on the state as well as on the individual" (184). But at a later stage he wanted the erstwhile owner and the workers of a concern to jointly hold trusteeship over it. The series of measures that Gandhi contemplated as his programme for achieving trusteeship in property relations and the use of personal talents in public interest is summarised thus:

Appeal to the better instincts in the rich, persuasion, education regarding the inevitability of change and the greater unattractiveness of the alternative of change by violence, non-violent non-co-operation by the exploited that would make the exploiter's functioning impossible, and finally legislative action. . . . (185).
VII. 3. 11. True economics

As is clear from the preceding discussion Gandhi's economic ideas are fully consistent with his metaphysical and ethical presuppositions. According to him the whole gamut of man's activities constitutes an indivisible whole and therefore, he did not draw any distinction between economics and ethics and considered that economics as untrue which ignored or disregarded moral values. It is this insistence of Gandhi on the indivisibility of economics and morality that prompted some economists to consider his economic system to be a path that leads to non-economic goals (186). The introduction of moral values as a regulating factor in economic matters Gandhi considered as an extension of the law of non-violence in the domain of economics (187). "True economics", wrote Gandhi, "never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. . . . true economics . . . stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest and is indispensable for a decent life" (188). The end sought in a non-violent economic order is happiness combined with full mental, moral and spiritual growth.

Article 4

THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE

"In no department of life has the contribution of Gandhi been so unique and significant as in the political field, national and international", comments J.B.Kripalani (189). The reason he adduces in support of this statement is that Gandhi assiduously applied fundamental values such as truth, justice, brotherhood of man and non-violence in men's relations in the political field, especially in the mutual dealings of organised
groups and nations (190). This is significant when we consider the fact that while moral values are often violated and flouted in all spheres of life, in political dealings the very recognition of the validity of the moral law is totally denied (191). Living in an age in which Machiavellianism rules the roost in the world of real politik, Gandhi declared that he was trying to introduce religion into politics (192). He said further. "The whole of my life is saturated with religious spirit and I could not live for a single second without religion. Many of my political friends despair of me because they say that even my politics are derived from my religion" (193).

VII. 4. 1. Moralising politics

It must be borne in mind here that by religion Gandhi does not mean formal or customary religion but "that religion which underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker" (194). Gandhi said subsequently that for him, politics bereft of religion are absolute dirt, ever to be shunned. Politics concern nations and that which concerns the welfare of nations must be one of the concerns of a man who is religiously inclined. in other words, a seeker after God and Truth. Therefore, in politics also we have to establish the Kingdom of Heaven (195).

Although Gandhi says that he takes part in politics only because politics encircle us like the coils of a snake from which no one can get out however much one tries, he admits that what he tries to do is to introduce religion into politics (196). Thus it is obvious that for Gandhi there is no politics without religion (197).

This inseparability of religion and politics, according to Ramshray Roy means, subordinating politics to religion and organizing the former on principles adduced from the latter. It also means that politics must become a means for articulating and reflecting, in socio-political life and organization, the basic value commitments that Gandhi considers essential for human existence...
Gandhi puts central emphasis on the process of self-development through a process of self-transformation and self-illumination which becomes instrumental in discovering truth, the ultimate reality (198).

In other words, Gandhi believes that the goal of life, self-realisation, cannot be achieved unless one identifies oneself with the entire humanity and strives hard to advance the greatest good of all. The potential of political activity in promoting the greatest good of all is certainly immense. In fact, when Gandhi speaks of politics as the coils of the snake, he means that it has become so pervasive that no department of human life is untouched by it and therefore, no responsible individual can shun it.

There is another reason why Gandhi insists on the religious or moral significance of politics and that is related to the connection between modern civilization and the degeneration of political institutions. The search for material comfort in modern civilization brings into operation intense competition "which makes power the central energizing force of politics. Created to put under leash and regulate self-aggrandizing tendencies, political institutions fail to preserve their impersonal and universal character and are reduced to an instrument for subserving powerful particular interests" (199). This degeneration of the political institutions erected as umpires into either partisan and interested players or meek and pliable watchdogs points to the imperative of cleansing politics of this devastating malady. The only way to do this seemingly impossible task, according to Gandhi, is to moralise or spiritualise politics by substituting the materialistic values of self-interest and competition with altruistic values of religion. That is why he said that for him there is no politics without religion and that politics without morality is a thing to be avoided (200). This belief of Gandhi that politics is basically
a religious or moral activity and that political activities should lead to the realisation of the final goal of life, self-realisation, constitutes the philosophical foundation of his political thought. And he was convinced that only in a non-violent political system can the goals of moral and spiritual development of the citizens be achieved.

VII. 4. 2. Enlightened anarchy

A non-violent political system or non-violent state may sound like a contradiction in terms. For Gandhi has said that he considered the state to represent violence in a concentrated and organised form; the state according to him is a soulless machine. "It can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its existence" (201). So in order for the state to become non-violent, the whole society should become non-violent. The justification for the use of violence and coercive power by the state is provided by the prevalence of violence in society. So when society comes to be organised and run on the basis of complete non-violence, the need for the state will disappear. This according to Gandhi, is a state of pure and enlightened anarchy and it is realisable to the extent non-violence is realisable. That state is perfect and non-violent where the people are governed the least. The nearest approach to the purest anarchy would be a democracy based on non-violence (202). But Gandhi was realist enough to admit that "government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent because it represents all people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society" (203).

It is important to note that Gandhi has used the expressions 'Swaraj', 'true democracy' and 'Ramarajya' to denote the stateless state of enlightened anarchy of his dream. What Gandhi means by these words, what he wants to achieve for the
entire people is not mere freedom from all restraints that the
word 'independence' means (204), but real sovereignty based on
moral authority (205), total freedom from government control,
self-rule and self-restraint (206). Gandhi used to remind us
that "Good government is no substitute for self-government" (207).

VII. 4. 3. Attitude to political power

In order to appreciate Gandhi's theory of state, we
must consider his attitude to political power. As is well-known,
Gandhi was an astute politician and a sagacious political
strategist. He was well-aware of the positive and negative uses
to which political power could be put. On the positive side,
political power can be used as a means for improving the living
conditions of the people and thus add to their moral and spiritual
development.

To me political power is not an end but one of the
means of enabling people to better their condition in
every department of life. Political power means
capacity to regulate national life through national
representatives. If national life becomes so perfect
as to become self-regulated no representation becomes
necessary. There is, then, a state of enlightened
anarchy. In such a state every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a
hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state,
therefore, there is no political power because there is
no state. But the ideal is never fully realised in
life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that
that Government is best which governs the least (208).

Gandhi also knew that power not only degenerates itself but
corrupts those who wield it. He would readily agree with Lord
Acton's well-known dictum that power corrupts and absolute power
absolutely. When Vincent Sheean asked him, "you mean to say that
power always corrupts?" Gandhi answered with an emphatic "Yes"
(209). It is the corruptive nature of political power that
prompted him to say: "I look upon an increase in the power of
the state with the greatest fear, because, although while
apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it does the
greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies

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at the root of all progress" (210). So Gandhi did not want political power to be concentrated on any centre, class or person for he understood that "centralisation as a system is inconsistent with non-violent structure of society" (211). So Gandhi always insisted upon a total decentralisation of political power whereby each individual will become a real and active centre of power.

VII. 4. 4. Decentralisation of power

In true democracy power will not be and cannot be centred in a few cities: it will have to be distributed among 'the seven hundred thousand villages of India' (village here stands for any type of small and face to face community). Power will vest with the real source of it - the people. It is swaraj of the masses, the poor man's swaraj. "My notion of democracy", says Gandhi, "is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest" (212).

Gandhi presented the structure of the decentralised political system of his dream in the well known exposition:

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units (213).

And Gandhi wanted the political administration of this system of village republics to be based on the renewed and revitalised village panchayats (214). True democracy, Gandhi said, cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village (215). He wrote:

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic or panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world (216).
Gandhi advocated greater powers for the panchayat because the greater the power of the panchayat the better it would be for the people. Gandhi wanted the active participation of the people in the political process for he knew that the springs of political power are the people themselves and that it is only through people's active participation that their inner development could be ensured and strengthened. He wanted the people to know that it is wrong to consider that they derive their strength from the government. The truth is that the government derives its strength from the people (218). Realising this basic political truth people must try to depend less on the government and more on themselves if they want to be really free and develop themselves properly. In order to achieve this, instead of sticking to representative democracy we must try participatory democracy. The panchayat system, according to Gandhi, is the best available model in which maximum participation of the people in the political process is possible and the chances of abuse of political power are reduced to the minimum.

VII. 4. 5. Swaraj by consent : a compromise

Gandhi was aware that this ideal might be rejected as Utopian. "I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and therefore, not worth a single thought" (219). He also admitted that in practice this ideal is perhaps never fully realised (220). But that did not worry Gandhi. He believed that when we find something to be true and good, our duty is to try to translate it into practice and not to waste time debating whether it is easy or difficult of achievement. The central question for Gandhi is not whether something is easy or difficult but whether it is right or wrong, good or bad, true or false. He brings in the oft repeated analogy of Euclid's point in this context also.

If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by
human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture (of an ideal political order) has its own for mankind. Let India live for this true picture, though never realisable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want before we can have something approaching it" (221).

As nowhere in the world does a state without government exist, it is evident that a government there must be to regulate the affairs of social life. Gandhi admitted that no government can succeed in becoming entirely non-violent (223) and so he prescribes 'a predominantly non-violent government' as the next best ideal to strive for. For him, "that state is perfect and non-violent where the people are governed the least and the nearest approach to such a government is democracy based on non-violence (224). One must hasten to add here that Gandhi was not an admirer or an apologist of the existing system of parliamentary democracy. That Gandhi in one of the severest and worst ever condemnations of parliamentary democracy called the English Parliament (popularly known as the Mother of Parliaments) a sterile woman and a prostitute (225), bears testimony to this. But Gandhi was not only not an enemy of democracy but a true democrat himself and therefore, recommends the democratic form of government for independent India. "By swaraj I mean the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the vote of the largest number of the adult population. male or female, native born or domiciled, who have contributed by manual labour to the service of the state and who have taken the trouble of having their names registered as voters. . . . (226). It is clear thus that the representative democracy that Gandhi visualises and recommends is not the conventional type familiar to us but is substantially different and has unique features to its credit. Swaraj by consent for Gandhi is a compromise and a preliminary step in the march towards true democracy. In true democracy every man and woman is taught to
think for himself or herself (227). Gandhi considers democracy disciplined and enlightened the fairest thing in the world (228), and defines democracy thus: "Democracy must in essence mean the art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all" (229).

VII. 4. 6. The need for vigilance and Satyagraha

Gandhi foresaw the risk of the misuse of power even under this system and therefore, emphasised the need for maintaining vigilance. According to Gandhi "real swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused" (230). As representative democracy is rule by majority the chances for the suppression of the minority opinion cannot be ruled out. As Gandhi cautioned us,

The rule of majority has a narrow application, i.e., one should yield to the majority in matters of detail. But it is slavery to be amenable to the majority, no matter what its decisions are. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I, therefore, believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority (231).

It is useful to recall here the famous pronouncement, "in matters of conscience the law of majority has no place". Moreover, it must be remembered that in the Sarvodaya order it is not the interest and welfare of the majority or the greatest number that is being considered but of all, including 'the last, the lowest and the least'.

In order to protect political power from being misused or abused Gandhi prescribes the use of Satyagraha. Doubts were raised from many quarters even during Gandhi's times as to the legitimacy of the use of the weapon of Satyagraha once independence was achieved. Do democracy and Satyagraha co-exist? Are they not contradictory? As no democracy can claim to be
perfect, no government can be said to be satyagraha-proof. Therefore, irrespective of the form of government Satyagraha has a place in human society since it is essentially a way of life and a non-violent technique of fighting all evil and injustice (232). So Satyagraha will always be effective in preventing and countering the abuse of power by governments. As Gandhi says, "Civil disobedience is a great store house of power. Imagine a whole people unwilling to conform to the laws of the legislature and prepared to suffer the consequences of non-compliance. They will bring the whole legislature and executive machinery to stand still" (233). Explaining the efficacy of Satyagraha in containing political corruption K. Santhanam observes:

Even democratic statesmen become slowly converted to a belief in their own infallibility and the wickedness of those who differ from them. They further tend to think that the end justifies the means. They get irritated at minor obstruction and inconveniences and begin to use the power of legislation to stifle criticism. In such circumstances, bold and open declarations by a few disinterested and prominent men that they may have to resort to satyagraha for the defence of democratic liberties may stop the rot. ... It is essential for democratic ruler to realise that true satyagraha is complementary to true democracy (234).

VII. 4. 7. Nationalism and internationalism

Gandhi is viewed by a section of political thinkers and commentators as a nationalist first and foremost as he fought for the rights of Indians in South Africa first and for the freedom of India later. But Gandhi's patriotism and nationalism were not parochial. He said:

For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am a patriot because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. ... Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life (235).

Gandhi finds no contradiction or antagonism between nationalism and internationalism. For him they are complementary. He observes:

It is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is
possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when people belonging to different countries have organised themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil. It is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations which is evil (236).

Gandhi was proclaiming his internationalism when he said: "My mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not merely freedom of India... but through realisation of freedom of India I hope to realise and carry on the mission of brotherhood of man" (237).

As one who had closely followed the developments in international politics Gandhi saw that the root cause of international strife and conflicts was exploitation of the weak nations by the strong. He firmly believed that in order to establish international peace and harmony between races and nations this exploitation must be resisted and removed. Gandhi's fight against colonialism and imperial domination was meant as an attempt to eliminate exploitation at the international level and thus pave the way for true internationalism. Gandhi viewed freedom of the colonies as an essential precondition for world peace and harmony. But Gandhi insisted that the fight to end the injustice and tyranny exercised by the strong nations over the weak must be non-violent and open. The moral law of non-violence is applicable in the settlement of internal disputes as well as international disputes. Therefore, Gandhi pleaded with the nations for the acceptance of non-violence in international relations so that lasting peace could be realised. The application of non-violence in international relations calls for sacrifice and martyrdom if need be. Gandhi says:

Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, and the province for the country, even so a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the
Thus Gandhi conveys to us the message that a non-violent, non-exploitative world order is the only guarantee for world peace. That is why it is said that 'there is no way to peace, peace is the way'.

Gandhi did not believe that peace could be established through diplomacy or through treaties and M.O.U. of associations for regional co-operation. Nor did he believe that world peace could be achieved either through a policy of balance of power or balance of terror. He had his own reservations about the role of a world organisation in maintaining international understanding and peace. What he strongly pleaded for was a change of attitude of the peoples in general and the top ranking political leaders in particular, and an acceptance of the fundamental fact that humanity is basically one and all are subject to the same moral law (239). Thus we can see that the practical measures he suggested for the settlement of national and international disputes are perfectly in tune with his metaphysical presuppositions and thus constitute an integral part of his world-view. Gandhi firmly believed that if this change of attitude takes place and people realise the unity of life it will usher in a new era of peace, and the world of tomorrow will be a society based on non-violence where there will be no poverty, no war, no bloodshed. "And in that world there will be a faith in God greater and deeper than ever in the past" (240).

VII. 4. 8. Obiter Dicta

Gandhi has given his considered views on many practical problem connected with the political management of society. His views, of course, are the mature fruits of his repeated experiments in political action and social reform (241). Gandhi is of the opinion that no department of political life is
impervious to the influence of Truth and Non-violence. "Truth and non-violence are not cloistered virtues", says Gandhi. "but applicable as much in the forum and the legislatures as in the market place" (242). Democracy and violence can ill go together and if the states are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent (243). Gandhi believed that in making room for parliamentary programme Indian democracy was committing itself to advance in the direction of non-violence (244).

But Gandhi had warned that if fighting for the legislatures meant the sacrifice of truth and non-violence, democracy would not be worth a moment's purchase (245). According to Gandhi the voice of the people is the voice of God (vox populi vox Dei) and in the Indian context it is the voice of the dumb millions who inhabit the villages of this country. In order to realise the great ideal of a decentralised and non-violent political order, Gandhi insists that the governors, ministers and peoples' representatives should follow a strict code of conduct. For example, an Indian Minister or Governor should ply the spinning wheel, the banner of non-violence, and use as far as possible only Indian-made goods. They should set apart at least one hour to do productive physical labour as an incentive to people. They should court extreme simplicity and should neither drink nor smoke. They must be completely free from all prejudice against any caste or creed and from any favouritism towards his relatives or friends. They must represent the best of all religions and all things Eastern or Western (247). Ministers shall not make any private gains for themselves or their relatives or friends and shall be receptive to public criticism. They shall not arrogate to themselves greater knowledge than those experienced men who do not happen to occupy ministerial chairs. They shall never promise what they
cannot do.

Even in a 'predominantly non-violent state' a police force may be necessary, concedes Gandhi, although he visualises a state where a police force will not be needed. This is a sign of imperfect Ahimsa (248). But the police of Gandhi's conception is of a wholly different pattern from the present day force. Its ranks will be composed of believers in non-violence. They will be servants, not masters, of the people. The police force will have some kind of arms but they will be rarely used, if at all. In fact, the policemen will be reformers. Their police work will be confined primarily to robbers and dacoits (249).

In a non-violent democracy of Gandhi's conception there will be crime but no criminals. All crimes, including murder will be treated as disease because Gandhi believed that "crime is a disease like any other malady and is a product of the prevalent social system" (250). "No one commits a crime for the fun of it. It is the sign of a diseased mind" (251). Pursuant to his views on crimes is Gandhi's suggestion that criminals should be treated as patients and jails should be hospitals, admitting this class of patients for treatment and cure. The outlook of the jail staff should be that of physicians and nurses in a hospital (252).

VII. 4. 9. Summing up

Thus we come to understand that Sarvodaya stands for an entirely new and revolutionary political order in which the need to resort to violence would be eliminated and the power of the state would be reduced considerably paving the way for the people to regain their lost self-confidence and will power and thus realise true swaraj in the sense of total mastery over oneself. The words of Vinoba sum up Gandhi's ideas of the political order of Sarvodaya:

*Sarvodaya does not mean good Government or majority rule. It means freedom from government, it means decentralisation of power. We want to do away with government by politicians and replace it by a government of the people, based on love, compassion and*
equality. Decision should be taken not only by a majority, but by unanimous consent, and they should be carried out by the united strength of the ordinary people of the village (253).

Only under such an order which Gandhi calls 'democracy disciplined and enlightened' can individual freedom have full play and thus the swaraj of his conception which means nothing less than the realisation of the Kingdom of God within you, and on this earth, can be translated into reality.

Article 5
THE EDUCATIONAL ORDER

The purpose of this article is not to present a detailed account of Gandhi's ideas on education and offer an evaluation, but only to attempt a brief explication of his educational theory in order to show how it is integral by itself and at the same time constitutes an organic part of his worldview.

VII. 5. 1. Life-long experiments

Gandhi is not an educationist in the conventional sense of the term. But many eminent educationists who had been privileged to come into contact with him have, to a man, called him a born educationist. "The only difference", says Kaka Kalelkar, "between Gandhiji and the other so called educationists is that while the latters' conception of education is imperfect in many ways, Gandhi has developed a complete philosophy of education as well as an appropriate technique for putting it into practice" (254). Gandhi wrote in reply to the Rt. Hon. Shri. Srinivasa Shastri: "I admit my limitations. I have no university education worth the name. My high school career was never above the average. I was thankful if I could pass my examinations. . . . Nevertheless, I do hold very strong views on education in general including what is called Higher Education. . . ." (255). It was the bold and revolutionary
experiments he conducted in education for over more than three
decades both in South Africa and India that emboldened him to
declare that he holds very strong views on education.

Gandhi confronted the problem of teaching his children while
in South Africa. As he did not like the education imparted in
the schools in Durban, he decided not to send them to any school
and started teaching them himself. He admits that he was not
able to do his duty by them to the best of his capacity but the
whole endeavour was his first attempt at experiments in education
(256). In the Tolstoy Farm Gandhi continued his educational
experiments on a wider scale and these experiments acquired new
dimensions. And we can see in them in an embrionic form all the
features of Na Talim or New Education of Gandhi viz., character-
building as the fundamental goal of education, the centrality of
work, the training of the body, mind and spirit being attempted
in a unified and integrated way, etc. The culmination of all
these experiments was reached in the educational conference of
October, 22 and 23, 1937, held at Wardha in which the famous
Wardha Scheme of education was finalised and presented before the
nation for acceptance. And on the strength of his cumulative
experiences Gandhi remarked while launching the Wardha Scheme: "I
have given many things to India. But this system of education
together with its technique is, I feel, the best of them. I
do not think I have anything better to offer the country" (257).

VII. 5. 2. Limitations of the British system of education

It was, in fact, the inherent limitations of the British
system of education imposed upon India by the alien government
that prompted Gandhi to give serious thought to education. "The
foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us", says
Gandhi (258). No wonder that India was enslaved as a result of
the education it received, for the author of the famous "Minutes
on Education". Lord Macaulay had made clear the aim of their

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education thus: "we must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect" (259). British education in India had succeeded fully in achieving this goal of creating a new class of collaborators who in connivance with their British masters tried to destroy Indian socio-economic and political institutions and the values that underlie them. The damage that British education caused to the education system indigenous to India was totally devastating. Needless to say that such unique features of the hoary Indian educational system as strong pupil-teacher relation (the school is an extension of the family in the India gurukula system (260.), integration of the pupils with the social and natural environment, community living, imbibing the values of the culture of the land etc., were cunningly subverted. That is why Gandhi called the British education in India "an unmitigated evil" (261) and exhorted to drive out Western civilization from the land. But Gandhi's approach to the problem was not negative. He was not content with an outright condemnation of the British system. On the other hand, after due experimentations and consultations with experts in the field, he wanted to substitute the rotten British system with a sound scheme of education. And that was how the remarkable Wardha Scheme of education known as Nai Talim or New Education was evolved and came to be launched.

VII. 5. 3. New Education or the Wardha Scheme

The following were the propositions originally formulated by Gandhi for discussion by the conference.

1. The present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. English having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning, has created a permanent bar between
the highly educated few and the uneducated many. It has prevented knowledge from percolating to the masses. This excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educated class a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. Absence of vocational training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically. Money spent on primary education is a waste of expenditure inasmuch as what little is taught is soon forgotten and has little or no value in terms of the villages or cities. Such advantage as is gained by the existing system of education is not gained by the chief tax-payer, his children getting the least.

2. The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the matriculation standard less English and plus a substantial vocation.

3. For the all-round development of boys and girls all training should, so far as possible, be given through a profit-yielding vocation. In other words, vocations should serve a double purpose — to enable the pupil to pay for his tuition through the products of his labour, and at the same time to develop the whole man or woman in him or her through the vocation learnt at school.

Land, building and equipment are not intended to be covered by the proceeds of the pupils' labour.

All the processes of cotton, wool and silk, commencing from gathering, cleaning, ginning (in the case of cotton), carding, spinning, dyeing, sizing, warp-making, double twisting, designing, and weaving, embroidery, tailoring, paper making, cutting, book binding, cabinet making, toy making, gur making are undoubtedly occupations that can
easily be learnt and handled without much capital outlay.

This primary education should equip boys and girls to earn their bread by the state guaranteeing employment in the vocations learnt or by buying their manufactures at prices fixed by the State.

4. Higher education should be left to private enterprise and for meeting national requirements whether in the various industries, technical arts, belles-lettters or fine arts.

The State Universities should be purely examining bodies, self-supporting through the fees charged for examinations.

Universities will look after the whole of the field of education and will prepare and approve courses of studies in the various departments of education. No private school should be run without the previous sanction of the respective Universities. University charters should be given liberally to any body of persons of proved worth and integrity, it being always understood that the Universities will not cost the State anything except that it will bear the cost of running a Central Education Department (262).

After a free frank and full discussion as Gandhi desired (263), the following resolutions were passed by the conference and the text of these resolutions constitutes the basic document of the New Basic Education of Gandhi.

1. That in the opinion of this conference free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.

2. That the medium of instruction be the mother tongue.

3. That the conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre around some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or
training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

4. That the conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers (264).

The scheme and syllabus of New Education was meticulously prepared by the expert committee appointed by the Wardha Educational Conference. Accordingly New Education is divided into Pre-Basic, Basic, Post-Basic, University and Social education. Pre-Basic is nursery education to be imparted to children below the age of seven. Basic education is elementary education lasting for a period of eight years to be given to boys and girls between seven and fifteen years of age. Post-Basic education is higher secondary education of boys and girls belonging to the age group between fifteen and eighteen. University or Higher education follows post-basic level and by Social education is meant adult and continuing education.

VII. 5. 4. The meaning and philosophy of New Education

Gandhi did not accept the ordinary meaning of education as a knowledge of letters (265). The dry knowledge of the three Rs which generally passes for education under the British system is a travesty of true education and knowledge, according to Gandhi. That is why he wrote that literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. "It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy, in itself, is no education . . . ." (266). True education, for him, is something more meaningful and noble. Gandhi writes: "By education I mean an all round drawing out of the best in the child and man — body, mind and sprit (267). Gandhi viewed life and man as a whole and as a unity and therefore, his approach to education also is in tune with this vision. As William
Cenkner remarks:

Every thing in Gandhi's thought is related to the universal value of truth, and ahimsa and directed towards the realization of God and a new humanity. Thus his educational scheme is best understood and appreciated within the frame work of the rest of his philosophy. Truth and ahimsa are the two principles entering into every aspect of his thought and activity. There is an identity of ideals between truth and ahimsa and the Wardha scheme for basic education. Truth, non-violence, service to humanity and fearlessness were Gandhi's goals, and education became the means to these goals (268).

According to Gandhi, "man is neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man" (269). And Gandhi considered education as the most effective means for achieving the harmonious development of these different aspects and dimensions of the human individual. He had said in the Hind Swaraj that education is an instrument and that an instrument may be well-used or abused (270). If used properly, education is a more effective instrument than socio-economic or political reforms in bringing about the desired changes in the social structure. It is a universally accepted principle in educational theory that education can play a key role in the remaking of society. This is especially true under the Sarvodaya order because Sarvodaya is a process of evolution for which generations of people well-trained in the values of truth and non-violence are required and this can be supplied only by a wholesome education. Thus, New Education is integrally related to the creation of a non-violent social order which in turn is indispensable for the realization of the ultimate goal of life for the individuals and humanity as a whole.

Gandhi viewed education as the art and science of man-making and social reconstruction. That is why he gave great importance to the aspect of character formation through education. When asked "what is your goal in education when India
obtains self rule?" Gandhi answered: "Character-building. I would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget oneself in working towards great aims...", and he went on to add: "I would feel that if we succeed in building the character of the individual, society will take care of itself..." (271). It has been pointed out by many commentators on Gandhi's educational theory that the purpose of New Education is to achieve the full or total development of the individual and the evolution of a new man, a satyagrahi (272). It may be relevant in this context to reproduce Prof. Huxley's definition of education (which emphasises the aspect of all-round, total development) that Gandhi cited approvingly in Hind Swaraj:

That man I think has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism it is capable of, whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order... whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the fundamental truths of nature... whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience... who has learnt to hate all vulgarity and to respect others as himself...

(273).

As the individual is a complex of body mind and soul, Gandhi wants education to be instrumental in developing all the three dimensions of the human personality in an integrated way. Good education, for him, is "that which draws out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of children" (274). And the best medium for the integrated development of the human personality according to Gandhi, is body labour conceived by him as bread-labour.

Work also has the three aspects, the physical, the mental and the spiritual. It is only when the human individual with his three dimensions acts and reacts with the three aspects of work by actually working, these various aspects of individuality and work act and react in a continuous way, resulting in the enriching of the human personality. So Gandhi wanted work to be the medium of his educational programme (275).
And he laid down that the child's education should begin by teaching it a useful handicraft and thus enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training (276).

VII. 5. 5. The centrality of work/craft - its significance

As we saw in the Wardha formula, Gandhi insisted that basic education is to be imparted through the medium of productive manual activity. This centrality of a productive craft in the educational process is, undoubtedly, the most notable feature of Gandhian education. In his illuminating interpretation of Basic education, J.B.Kripalani too has underlined this as the most unique feature of the scheme (277). Gandhi is of the view that if a craft rich in educational opportunities and easily correlated with the life of the child is selected, through the instrumentality of that craft all necessary intellectual instruction can be effectively imparted to him. It has been established by evolutionary psychologists that biologically thinking develops in man only as an aid to action. Therefore, it is clear that Gandhi's scheme of education is based on the sound and indisputable fact that knowledge and understanding develop in relation to problems set by action (278).

Explaining how the human personality can be developed in an integral way through the medium of a craft in education Gandhi writes:

I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g., hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose etc. In other words an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be poor lop-sided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. A proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds pari passu with education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. They constitute an indivisible whole. According to this theory, therefore, it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piece-meal or independently of one another (279).
Gandhi knew that it was, of course, a revolutionary idea. He strongly believed that education has got to be revolutionised and for this the brain must be educated through the hand. "If I were a poet", says Gandhi, "I could write poetry on the possibilities of the five fingers. Why should you think that the mind is everything and the hands and feet nothing?

Imparting basic education through the medium of a productive craft has other advantages as well which fit neatly into the socio-economic structure of the Sarvodaya society that Gandhi envisages. The ancient village organisation in India was destroyed by the industrialisation introduced by the British and consequently "the people of the village were disorganised, lost their occupations, felt helpless and paralysed and were sinking steadily into poverty, unemployment and despair"

As India lived in her villages, the only way of saving the nation was to revive village economic life and to relate education to it. Gandhi held that education should be based on village occupations and thus it must become a tool of village reconstruction. Thus, as William Cenkner rightly evaluates, education through craft would place the destiny of the masses in their own hands and give them a sense of dignity and identity and would eradicate any dependency on foreign imports. "Written into the Wardha scheme of education were means to revive village industries, crafts and the spirit of village life"

In brief basic education can play a very important role in the economic re-organisation and re-vitalisation of rural India.

By basing primary education on productive manual activity, Gandhi also wanted to save Indian society from a grave disease it had contracted chiefly from British education namely, antipathy towards manual labour. The British wanted to create a class of clerks for the government and therefore, introduced a purely literary education in India with English as the medium of
instruction. This led to the creation of a division between physical and intellectual activities. The educated class distanced themselves from the public and came to look down upon manual labour as something inferior and debasing. The only way, Gandhi felt, to make education of some practical value to the people and to inculcate in the educated persons a genuine sense of respect for physical labour and thus re-establish the dignity of labour in society is to impart basic education through a productive manual activity. That is why a productive craft is situated centrally in the scheme for basic education. And dignity of labour can contribute considerably towards the creation of a classless, casteless, egalitarian society and thus play a key role in the evolution of a Sarvodaya social order.

VII. 5.6. Social orientation

It must be clear from the above that Gandhi visualised education as the builder of a non-violent social order and therefore, his educational theory has a clear social orientation. The school does not exist in a vacuum. It is a part of society and is integrally related to it. The hopes and aspirations of the society must be reflected in all the activities of the school, curricular as well as co-curricular. In a non-violent social order based on the co-operation and creative participation of all its members, the school has to be basically a community organised on the same lines and principles as the society is expected to be organised. Thus the school becomes a social laboratory experimenting with new ideas and ideals and at the same time a training centre fulfilling the special task of moulding the citizens of the new society which has accepted truth and ahimsa as its foundational values.

VII. 5.7. The Technique of correlation

In any serious discussion of Gandhi's educational theory, the problem of correlation is repeatedly raised. Though
Gandhi did not work out in detail the technique of correlation in basic education, he had given an ideological basis to it. In conventional educational theory what is meant by correlation is that every subject is to be taught in such a way that its relation to the other subjects should be clearly shown (283). But Gandhi conceived correlation in an entirely different perspective. He was not very keen about the linkage of subjects in this fashion. For him correlation is the method of linking experience and learning together (284). He wanted all subjects to be correlated to the central craft that is carefully selected after giving due consideration to the natural and social environment of the child. Wrote Gandhi:

The old idea was to add a handicraft to the ordinary curriculum of education followed in the school.... To me that seems to be a fatal mistake. The teacher must learn the craft and correlate his knowledge to the craft so that he will impart all that knowledge to his pupils through the medium of the particular craft that he chooses" (285).

In order to illustrate the integrative role of the craft in achieving correlation Gandhi brings in the example of spinning and explains: "Unless I know arithmetic I cannot report how many yards of yarn I have produced on the takli.... I must learn figures to be able to do so, and I also must learn addition and subtraction and multiplication and division...." (286).

Referring to the book Cotton - The Story of Mankind, Gandhi points out that not only mathematics but also geography, history, agriculture, commerce etc., can be taught to the pupils on the basis of spinning. This, according to him, is real correlation. But the success of it depends upon two factors, (1) the unity of the craft as an integrative element and its comprehensiveness and (2) resourceful and patient teachers who are ever ready to conduct experiments (287). Gandhi writes:

The main thing is that the teacher should retain his freshness of mind. If you come across something that you cannot correlate with the craft, do not fret over
and get disheartened. Leave it and go ahead with the subjects that you can correlate. May be another teacher will hit upon the right way and show how it can be correlated... (288).

VII. 5. 8. Instruction through mother tongue

Gandhi insisted that the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue of the pupils. According to him the best and the most easy way to relate education to the social, political and cultural life of the country is to impart it in the mother tongue. Gandhi has written at large on the question of English learning as he was aware of the terrible damage it has done to the culture of the land. "Real education", Gandhi reiterated, "is impossible through a foreign medium" (289).

Enumerating the ravages caused by the foreign medium, Gandhi writes:

The foreign medium has caused brainfag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them cramers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system... (290).

Thus it is clear that the foreign medium is capable of defeating the very aims that Gandhi has set for education viz., character building and the all round development of the human personality. So Gandhi insisted on making the mother tongue of the pupils the medium of instruction because that is the best way to initiate a child into the process of learning and therethrough self development (291).

VII. 5. 9. Higher education

Gandhi had very clear and considered views on higher education. He wanted to revolutionize higher education and relate it to national necessities. Months before the Wardha educational conference he wrote in Harijan that in the New Education he visualised there would be degrees for engineers. "They would be attached to the different industries which would..."

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pay for the training of the graduates they need" (292). Each
industrial establishment can run a college for training engineers
needed by them and the state will not meet any expense incurred
in this regard. Thus, Commerce will have its college and train
its personnel. Medical colleges should be attached to certified
hospitals and should be supported by voluntary contribution.
Agricultural colleges should be self-supporting and must play a
key role in the economic rebuilding of rural India (293). While
answering the Rt. Hon. Shri. Srinivasa Shastri's criticism of
Basic Education scheme, Gandhi summarised his views on higher
education:
1. I am not opposed to education even of the highest type
attainable in the world.
2. The state must pay for it wherever it has definite use for
it.
3. I am opposed to all higher education being paid for from the
general revenue.
4. It is my firm conviction that the vast amount of the so-
called education in arts given in our colleges is sheer
waste and has resulted in unemployment among the educated
classes. What is more, it has destroyed the health, both
mental and physical, of the boys and girls who have the
misfortune to go through the grind in our colleges.
5. The medium of a foreign language through which higher
education has been imparted in India has caused incalculable
intellectual and moral injury to the nation. We are too
near our own time to judge the enormity of the damage done.
And we, who have received such education have both to be
victims and judges—an almost impossible feat (294).

Thus we see that the New Education propounded by
Gandhi is comprehensive enough to meet the social, economic,
political and cultural needs of the people. It is, indeed, a
revolutionary scheme as the different streams of education
namely, naturalism, idealism and pragmatism merge in it to form
a mighty confluence.

VII. 5. 10. An estimate - liberative education.

As William Cenkner points out, naturalism in education
is apparent from Gandhi's tendency towards simplicity in life.
in language and literature and in his opposition to pedantry. The Gandhian school is an extension of the home related to the child's environment, learning takes place there in an atmosphere of play respecting the freedom of the child, productive activity is emphasised in learning - all these contribute to the naturalistic setting of education. On the other hand, the most outstanding feature of Gandhi's educational theory is its definite idealism. Gandhi shares the idealist goal in educational theory viz., the creation of a spiritual man in a spiritual society. "Conceiving education as a preparation for total life and not necessarily for a specific profession is another idealist goal. Yet his ideal of self-realization, that is, the more perfect attainment of truth and non-violence were the most motivating educational goals for him" (295). By integrating the entire process of learning into a productive craft drawn from the natural environment of the individual Gandhi's education demonstrates an explicit pragmatism (296). Thus, the New Education conceived by Gandhi synthesises the seemingly disparate and contradictory goals in education and proves himself to be ahead of the other prominent educationists like Pestolozzi, Herbart, Froebel, and Dewey (297). In short, Gandhi's education is liberative in the true sense of the term and deserves the definition sa vidya ya vimuktaye - education is that which liberates.

Afterword
We started this chapter on Gandhi's vision of a new society - Sarvodaya - which is based on the spiritual perception of the oneness of all life, sentient and non-sentient. The Sarvodaya ideal incorporates into itself the material and spiritual dimensions of the individual. "It has the individual - in society in view and the worldly as well as the other-worldly interest of all always" (298). Sarvodaya being a
comprehensive concept does not sacrifice mundane interest for the sake of spiritual gains or vice-versa. It gives equal importance to both physical and metaphysical aspects of life and is keen to ensure a healthy and vigorous mundane existence to all. At the same time, it insists that this life should be used as a springboard for launching a vigorous spiritual life. From this point of view, according to R.R. Diwakar, a simple, healthy and non-violent socio-economic-political-cultural structures have to be devised in the intermediate stages (299), for only under such an order will the pursuit of the higher goals of life be possible. Thus, the sarvodaya approach to life and its problems is a wholistic approach which integrates the individual into the communitarian milieu and harmonises the material aspirations and goals with the spiritual and thus insures the evolutionary and all sided development of all sentient beings.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

4. Young India, November 13, 1924, p. 378.
9. For example, All India Spinners Association and All India Village Industries Association.
13. The story of how Gandhi happened to read John Ruski’s book
Unto This Last and was deeply influenced by its message is
narrated in chapter XVIII of his Autobiography. He
translated Unto This Last into Gujarati entitling it
Sarvodaya (the welfare of all). Gandhi says that he
discovered some of his deepest convictions reflected in this
short but great book and therefore, it captured him and
transformed his life. Gandhi summarises the teachings of
Unto This Last as follows:

1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good
   of all.

2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's
   in as much as all have the same right of earning their
   livelihood from their work.

3. That a life labour i.e., the life of the tiller of the
   soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living. The
   third had never occured to me. Unto This Last made it as
   clear as day light for me that the second and the third were
   contained in the first. I arose with the dawn, ready to
   reduce these principles to practice. This was how the
   concept of Sarvodaya originated.

14. Gandhi's trusted followers like Vinoba and Jayaparakash
   Narayan (popularly known as J.P.) developed the concept
   through the revolutionary movements of Bhooman (land gift)
   and Total Revolution. Later R.R. Diwakar, veteran Gandhian
   thinker, brought out the ecological dimension implicit in
   Sarvodaya.

    p. 201.

16. Ideology is used here as social formulas, as belief-systems,
    which can be used to mobilize people for actions. See


18. R.R. Diwakar, "Sarvodaya A Comprehensive Concept" in Gandhi

19. Ibid., pp. 175 - 176.


21. Young India, November, 1931.


23. Hind Swaraj, Chapter XVIII.

24. Young India, October, 1931.


27. As a brief discussion of the Constructive Programme is
    attempted in a subsequent chapter here this point is
    mentioned only in passing.

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28. **Varna** literally means colour. Here it means one of the four divisions of Hindu Society namely the *Brahmanas* who are visualised as being capable of giving moral guidance to society with their selfless intellectual and spiritual accomplishments, the *Kshatriyas* who represent the martial element in society through heroic determination defend and secure the safety of society, the *Vaishyas* who represent the commercial class serve society through their dealings in trade and money, and the *Shudras* which consists of men who are physically strong and capable of good work and so provide the physical services inevitable for society. See Dr. S. Gopalakrishnan, *Hindu Social Philosophy*, Op. cit., pp. 174-185. *Ashrama* suggests stage of life, the four stages in an individual's life being (1) *brahmacharya*- student life (2) *garhastha* - house holder (3) *vanaprastha* (4) *sanyasa*.

29. *Young India*. October 20, 1927, p. 355.
30. Ibid., October 27, 1927, p. 357.
31. Ibid., October 20, 1927, p. 355.
32. Ibid., October 6, 1921, p. 317.
33. Ibid., March 13, 1925, p. 92.
34. Ibid., November 24, 1927, p. 391.
35. *Young India*. September 29, 1927, p. 329.
38. *Young India*, December 29, 1920, p. 2.
39. Ibid., January 5, 1921, p. 2.
42. *Harijan*. March 4, 1933, p. 5.
44. As is well-known Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ranks first among those who unceremoniously expressed their disapproval of Gandhi's interpretation of the Varna system. See, Dr. Ambedkar's book *What Congress and Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables* (published 1945), especially the chapter 'Gandhism'. As a detailed examination and evaluation of these adverse criticism (that have blatantly transgressed all the bounds of decency) does not come within the scope of the present study, it is not attempted here. But it would be in the fitness of things to suggest to those who want to go deep into the question the study by Dr. S. Gopalakrishnan, *Hindu Social Philosophy* (Op. cit.) especially chapter 7 which contains a rather thorough discussion of the various issues involved in the concept of varna. It is also important to point out that the above study is not a defence
of Gandhi's understanding of the varna system and therefore, would help an unprejudiced student to gain proper insight into the implications and relevance of the varna system.


46. *Young India*. April 23, 1925, p. 145.

47. Ibid., November 24, 1927, p. 370.

48. *Harijan*. September 28, 1934, p. 20. See also *Harijan*. April 15, 1933, p. 2 where Gandhi says, "Numerous verses from the Shastras unmistakably show that mere birth counts for nothing. A person must show corresponding works and character to establish his claim by birth. . . . , birth while it gives a start and enables the parents to determine the training and occupation of their children does not perpetuate the Varna of one's birth, if it is not fulfilled by works".


52. *Young India*. November 24, 1927, p. 390.

53. *Harijan*. March 25, 1933, p. 3.


56. *Young India*. April 23, 1925, p. 139.

57. Ibid., January 22, 1925, p. 30.

58. Ibid.


60. *Young India*. May 25, 1921, p. 165.


63. Indira Rothermund, "Mahatma Gandhi and Harijans", in V.T. Patil (ed.), *New Dimensions and Perspectives In Gandhism*, New Delhi. 1989, p. 430. See also the argument: "In terms of hermeneutics Gandhi's use of the word 'Harijan' is an attempt at the restoration of a meaning addressed to his readers and listeners in the form of a message that transcends the experience of the listeners and transposes their understanding to a higher level of self comprehension. This level of self comprehension is rooted in faith and a willingness to listen, it is characterised by a respect for the man who postulates the concept and the credibility of Gandhi in this respect was irresistible. His language leaps across two thresholds that of the experience of the
Untouchables, vis-a-vis the caste Hindus which has a hold on their thought, and on the other side it lifts them to the level of the immanence and transcendence of the Supreme Being as expressed in the equation of Hari (God) and Jan (man), which poses the inherent equality of all." (Ibid., p. 428).

64. Young India. April 27, 1921. p. 135.
66. Ibid., December 26, 1924. p. 423.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Young India. May 1, 1924, p. 124.
75. From Yeravda Mandir, p. 33.
78. Ibid., p. 215.
83. Ibid., p. 147.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
91. Harijan. October 12, 1934.
96. Young India. August 27, 1925.
98. Young India. September 15, 1927.
103. For example, the historian Geraldine Forbes. See also Barbara Southard. "The Feminism of Mahatma Gandhi", Op. cit., p. 393.
105. Ibid., p. 238.
106. Amritananda Das in his 'Introductory Remarks' to the masterly study Foundations of Gandhian Economics (Delhi 1979), argues that in order to apply Gandhian economics to solve the problems of development policy making and to use Gandhi as a guide to contemporary development planning, we must penetrate beyond the concrete Gandhian economic programmes and uncover the analytical foundations on which they are based. Such an analysis will have no resemblance "to the ethico-mystical mish-mash usually represented as Gandhian economics", says he. (p. viii) The attempt made in the book Romesh Diwan and Mark Lutz (ed.), Essays in Gandhian Economics. G.P.F., New Delhi, 1985, is to put the Gandhian economic concepts in a technical conceptual frame work familiar to modern economists and social scientists. See the 'Foreward' by J.D. Sethi and 'Introduction' by the learned editors.
109. Ibid. See also the 'Foreward' by J. D. Sethi.

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111. Ibid.
114. Ibid., p. XII.
117. *Young India*, October 13, 1921, p. 325.
121. *Young India*, March 17, 1927.
123. Ibid.
125. Ibid., p. 509. See *Nehru on Gandhi*, p. 90.
131. *Young India*, November 15, 1928, p. 381.
132. Ibid., October 13, 1921, p. 325.
133. Ibid., October 10, 1931, p. 310.
137. *Harijan*, February 1, 1942, p. 27.
138. Ibid.
139. See Harijan, January 13, 1940, pp. 410 - 411.


141. It is to underline the priority accorded to the weakest section that Vinoba preferred the term anyyodaya to sarvodaya.


144. Ibid., pp. 7 - 8.


147. Ibid., p. 110.

148. Harijan, August 29, 1936, p. 226. It is important to note that one of the worst ever condemnations of the Indian village system and its rural civilization is advanced by Karl Marx in an article entitled "British Rule in India", published in the newspaper "New York Daily Tribune", No. 3804, June 25, 1853 (See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Works, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, Vol. I, p.p. 488 - 493). Marx's antipathy against Indian village system is almost wild. Among the reasons Marx adduces in support of his condemnation the most speculative are that (1) he considers the village system as the solid foundation of Oriental despotism (Marx does not explain how) and that (2) the villages were contaminated by distinctions of caste and slavery and that (3) . . . "and thus brought about a brutalising worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Kanuman, the monkey and Sabbala, the cow." (Ibid., pp. 492 - 493). Marx calls the Indian village communities "semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities . . . ." (Ibid., p. 492). Compare this with what Max Muller says: "If I were to ask myself from what literature we here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life - again I should point to India." (quoted in Hind Swaraj, Op. cit., Appendices II, p. 107) or with J. Young's (Secretary, Savon Mechanics Institutes) statement: "Those races (the Indian viewed from a moral aspect) are perhaps the most remarkable people in the world. They breathe an atmosphere of moral purity, which cannot but excite admiration. and this is especially the case with the poorer classes, who not withstanding the privations of their humble lot, appear to be happy and contented. True children of
nature, they live on from day to day, taking no thought for the morrow and thankful for the simple fare which Providence has provided for them" (Ibid., pp. 108 - 109). or with what Schigiel says: "... among nations possessing indigenous philosophy and metaphysics together with an innate relish for these pursuits, such as at present characterise Germany and in olden times was the proud distinction of Greece Hindustan holds the first rank in point of time" (Ibid., p. 107). See also Pyarelal, Towards New Horizons, Op. cit., p. 56.


154. Ibid.
156. Ibid., November 2, 1934, p. 301.
158. Young India, January 8, 1925, p. 11.
160. Young India, October 21, 1926, p. 368.
162. Young India, March 17, 1927, p. 85.
164. Young India, September 17, 1925, p. 321.
170. Ibid., p.p. 177 - 178.
172. Ibid., June 22, 1935.
176. J.D. Sethi lists seven kinds of alienation: (1) alienation of man from his work, (2) alienation of man from the commodities he produces, (3) alienation of consumption from production, (4) alienation of man from social organisms, (5) alienation of man from one another, (6) alienation of man from Nature, and (7) alienation of man from his inner self. Sethi is of the view that this provides a nearly complete Gandhian definition of alienation.
177. Ibid., p. 189.
182. Ibid.
184. Ibid., p. 85, quoted from the prayer speech of Gandhi on February 2, 1947.
185. Pyareal, Op. cit., p. 45. There are many thinkers and economists who consider Gandhi's theory of socialism through trusteeship as the Gandhian alternative to capitalism and the scientifi c socialism of the Marxian type. For example V.K.R.V. Rao, J.D. Sethi, Manmohan Choudhuri, Amlan Datta et. al.
187. Young India. December, 26, 1924, p. 388.
190. Ibid.
191. Ibid.
192. quoted in Romain Rolland, Mahatma Gandhi, New Delhi, p.98.
199. Ibid., p. 146.
203. Ibid., March 9, 1940, p. 31.
204. Young India. March 19, 1931, p. 38.
206. Young India. March 19, 1931.
207. Ibid., September 22, 1931.
208. Ibid., July 2, 1931, p. 162.
214. Panchayat literally means an assembly of five elected by the villagers. It represents the system by which the innumerable village republics in India were governed. See Young India. May 28, 1931, p. 123.
216. Ibid., July 28, 1946, p. 236.
220. Young India. July 2, 1931, p. 162.
222. Ibid., September 15, 1946, p. 309.
223. Ibid., March 9, 1940, p. 31.
224. Ibid., July 21, 1940, p. 211.
228. Young India, July 30, 1931, p. 199.
231. Ibid., March 2, 1922, p. 192.
233. Quoted in Krishna Kripalani, All Men are Brothers. For a detailed discussion of the role of Satyagraha in a democratic state, see K. Santhanam, Satyagraha and the State, and also R.R. Diwakar Saga of Satyagraha (Chapter 20), and Ravindra Varma, Five Fallacies.
235. Young India, March 16, 1921, p. 81.
236. Ibid., June 18, 1925, p. 211.
237. Ibid., April 4, 1929, p. 107.
243. Ibid., November 12, 1938, p. 328.
244. Ibid., May 6, 1937, p. 98.
245. Ibid., May 1, 1937, p. 89.
248. Ibid., September 1, 1940, p. 265.
249. Ibid.
259. Quoted in K.G. Warty, A Study of Gandhian Education. Bombay, 1981. pp. 25 - 26. 260. Gurukula is the ancient system of instruction indigenous to India in which the pupil live in close companionship with the guru - teacher - as a member of his house-hold or kula, during the entire period of his education.
264. Ibid.
267. Ibid.
274. Harijan. September 1, 1937.
275. R. Achuthan, Taking Gandhi to People through Seminars. New Delhi, p. 23.


280. Ibid., February 18, 1939.


289. Young India, September 1, 1921, p. 276.

290. Ibid.

291. That Gandhi was uncompromising in his insistence on the abolition of English as the medium of instruction does not, in the least, mean that he was an enemy of English. Far from it. Gandhi says, "My uncompromising opposition to the foreign medium has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of Young India could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages, that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy, and therefore, consider its knowledge on the part of some of us as essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature, I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars." Young India, September, 1921, p. 276 quoted in N.K. Bose, Op. cit., p. 285.


293. Ibid.


296. Ibid., p. 106.

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